The American Scholar

Volume 32

1963

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Volume 32 *Winter, 1962-63* Number 1

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

When I published my first little book about the New England countryside Charles Poore (thinking I suppose of my fellow drama critic, Brooks Atkinson) dismissed me with amiable flippancy as "just another Broadwayite doubling as Connecticut Yankee." That was in 1949. Nowadays when I pay one of my brief visits to New York, taxi drivers usually ask, "Where are you from?" Even the shills employed by the rubberneck buses sometimes address me hopefully. Evidently that much of the big-city look can be rubbed off in little more than a decade.

Just what combination of stigmata now mark me as a provincial I am not sure. Do I gawk at the tall buildings? Do I wait before crossing the street for the light to turn green instead of sensing, as the true New Yorker does, that traffic has just been halted by a yellow and that I can save a few seconds if I jump the gun and am willing to disregard the possibility that some equally hurried automobilist has also decided to take advantage of the neutral seconds? Of course, I should prefer to think that the things that distinguish me are less humiliating. Is it just that I have lost that harried look? Or even, perhaps, that my hat (although of not more than a quarter-gallon capacity) does have a slightly Western brim. I don't know. It may even be that I unconsciously assume the famous it's-a-nice-place-to-visit-but-I'd-hate-to-live-here look.

I am writing this some weeks after my last visit during which (falling again into the pattern of the provincial) most of my play-going was confined to the long-established hits. Who living in New York and going to the theater at all did not see *My Fair Lady* before 1962? And the nearest I came to being up-to-date was to explore some of the off-Broadway productions that had been running long enough for even me to have heard of them. This newest of Little Theater movements was just getting started when I bowed to an inner voice that whispered, "Go west, old man," and I was mildly curious to know to what extent the phenomenon resembled the off-Broadway movement of my own younger days when we reviewers put the Bandbox, the Provincetown, the Neighborhood and the New Playwrights Theatre on our visiting list.

To those young enough to regard the experimental theaters of that age as something belonging to a dead past when even those who supposed themselves sophisticated were actually hopeless squares, I would like to insist that so far as the "New Wave" dramaturgy is concerned there are parallels fairly close. What we called "expressionism" had adopted a method (or lack of method) quite similar to the *non sequiturs* of existential surrealism. Beckett and Ionesco (especially the latter) may be a good deal more gamey than, say, Dos Passos in his *The Moon Is a Gong* or John Howard Lawson in *Roger Bloomer,* but they are hardly less realistic and I doubt that any "modern" director has thought of anything more irrational than the incident in one play (whose title and author I have forgotten) where young ladies costumed as monkeys rushed down the aisles to distribute lollipops to the audience. Since this particular production was supported in part by a certain eminent financier it led Alexander Woollcott to observe that the greatest

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all-day sucker of them all was probably Mr. Otto Kahn.

Among the new productions I was most impressed—if that is the word—by Jean Genet's long-run hit, *The Balcony*. As I suppose everybody interested in such things knows by now, this work concerns a creative bawdy house that stages (for pretty high fees, I should imagine) elaborate fantasies designed to gratify the special erotic obsessions of the customers and in which they may participate as actors. Most of these customers want to dress up and pretend that they are someone else. A judge wants to be judged, condemned and punished by a sadistic beauty. A clergyman wants to dress up as a bishop and then couple with a young woman who pretends to be Saint Theresa. But from the standpoint of the audience the most rewarding of these eccentrics is the one who must imagine himself a general on a bloody battlefield and is in love with his horse—the last delightfully acted by a handsome dancer provided with a magnificent tail and trained to prance like a mare. On the other hand, the profoundest psychological insight is provided by a chief of police on his way to dictatorship who realizes that he will never have achieved self-fulfillment until some patron of the "House of Illusions" wants to take part in a charade in which he can imagine himself to be this very chief of police.

This last strikes me as being neither more nor less profound than a gag of the twenties that declared, "You can't call yourself really famous until somebody goes crazy and imagines that he is you." As a wisecrack it may just possibly pass muster but as the foundation for a philosophical drama it is hardly adequate.

For these and other reasons my summary judgment as a retired and outmoded reviewer is simply that *The Balcony* offers several moments of sensational effectiveness in its erotic scenes but that its strained and contorted philosophizing is sheer piffle. What I shall longest remember is the dancer with the tail. And, if the best thing about the old show with the free lollipops was Woollcott's comment, so, I am inclined to think, the best thing about *The Balcony* is *Time* Magazine's tribute to the equine grace of the dancer above mentioned. This tribute, exhibited in a gigantic blowup outside the theater, reaches its climax when it calls the young lady in question "the first whorse in history."

What is one to make of the vogue of such plays as *The Balcony*? Is it to be taken, as Moscow would no doubt like to believe, as evidence of the utter decadence of Western civilization and a sure sign that we are on the point of collapse? Or shall we shrug it off by remarking that art has a tendency to go to extremes and that audiences are actually little affected by such eccentricities? My own guess would be that the correct estimate is somewhere in between and that it is not uninteresting to inquire what is new and what isn't in such writers as Genet, Beckett and Ionesco.

A few sentences back I quoted *Time* with approval. Although I do not take most of my critical opinions from either that publication or its sisters, I think a survey of the off-Broadway phenomenon that appeared in *Life* put its finger on a very significant fact. The new surrealistic play, it said, resembles in both theme and method some of the classic "bits" of the burlesque show and it cited a very famous one known in the business as "Flogel Street." In this sketch an inoffensive and innocent lost stranger asks a passerby how to get to the street in question. Thereupon the stranger turns upon him, reproaches him for being a panhandler, grows more and more vehement, finally pulls the victim's hat over his eyes and departs in a rage. This is much the kind of irrational thing that happens to the innocent and the lost in Beckett or Ionesco. It embodies the Kafkaesque obsession with a punishment that cannot fit the crime because no crime, except that of being innocent, has been committed.

Life's comments, which I have already somewhat expanded, seem to me important enough to be worth pursuing further. Not only the theme—man bewildered in a meaninglessly hostile world—but also the method is the same. Like the surrealist play, the typical burlesque bit asks us to abandon

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any pretense to the literal "imitation of life," and to accept the wildest improbability. Take for example the endlessly repeated situation where a tramp who poses as the Count de Something-or-Other is accepted at the aristocratic reception despite the glaring decrepitude of his clothes and the grotesqueness of his manners. What happens could happen only in the wildest of dreams. But, as in a dream, there is what Freud called the latent content. Here is a fantasy that embodies hopes and fears as well as what it is now fashionable to call the essential "absurdity" of existence.

Actually, of course, the whole tradition of the clown—whether he be a classic clown in whiteface or a highly individual clown like Charlie Chaplin—is the same. He is always in search of both identity and dignity. He cannot "belong" because he is not like other men. He is perpetually rejected and he has every sort of indignity thrust upon him—from the kick in the pants to the pie in the face. *He Who Gets Slapped,* he was called in a second-rate but somehow revealing Russian play. And that is precisely what the existentialist hero, like the eternal clown, usually is.

Why, then, aren't the plays of Beckett, Ionesco, *et alii,* merely burlesque bits or circus interlude? The difference is, I think, the difference between laughter and self-pity. For one thing, most clowns, including Chaplin, have their brief moments of triumph. Sometimes they rebel and, throwing caution to the winds, do exactly what they want to do, and even get away with it for the moment. Hope springs eternal. The clown's head is bloody—also drenched and full of custard or wallpaper paste—but it is unbowed. The existential hero, on the other hand, can't trip up a policeman or land a custard pie in the face of his tormentors. He is always and invariably "he who gets slapped," never he who slaps in return.

An even more important difference is this: We are not asked to identify so completely with the clown. We rejoice, as Lucretius has it, not because we enjoy the pains of others but because we say (or try to say) that they are not ours. Of the clown we may think, "There but for the grace of God go I." The existentialist hero asks us to conclude instead: "Since there is no God to grant the grace, there in fact I am."

Some time ago Benjamin DeMott published in the pages of this magazine an extremely shrewd and interesting analysis of the current style of "sick" humor—which is of course not too distantly related to surrealistic plays by its pessimism and its morbidity. Two footnotes I should like to add —one of them in mild protest, the other a mere addition.

Since I myself have just been treading the same dangerous ground it hardly becomes me to point out that the solemn analysis of jokes has its dangers. Shelley, whose sense of humor was by no means overdeveloped, is said to have declared that *The School for Scandal* taught him at last to understand what is meant by the comic spirit. When, he said, you present as likable a dissipated and dishonest young man while ridiculing his sober brother you have what is called "a comedy." And without wishing to question the general soundness of Mr. DeMott's contention that there is perversity and corruption in some "sick" comedy I think that in a few instances he overstates his case.

No doubt audiences take in diverse ways such jokes as those he cites ridiculing the health drives. ("Help Stamp Out Blackheads; Put the Squeeze on this Dread Disease!") But to me it seems that the ridicule is here directed, not against the aims of the health drives, but (and very properly) at the methods used to publicize them. We have far too much faith in the effectiveness and propriety of the clever slogan, too little in a rational appeal. The jingle may be suitable for selling a toothpaste but it degrades and makes trivial any serious enterprise. Slogans always arouse my suspicion and I think they are dangerous tools for those whose aims are completely honest. Religion, so it seems to me, is in a bad way if the most effective method of promoting is by putting up billboards that proclaim, "The family that prays together stays together." The comedians who ridicule such procedures as those now usual in the pro-

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motion of presumably worthy causes are not so sick as the philanthropy that rests its case on a jingle.

So much for my mild objection. As for my mere addenda to Mr. DeMott's article, it is simply this: Sick humor, although it is indeed enjoying a vogue probably unprecedented, is by no means new, and parallels to the modern examples are even closer than those between the clown and the existentialist hero. Mr. DeMott cites *A Modest Proposal* as proof that Swift cannot be misunderstood and that he is clearly on the side of the angels. But could he say the same thing of Swift's vision of judgment in which God dismisses all human beings as fools not worth damning or of any one of the various "sick" descriptions of the foulness of physical love? Swift is at the moment one of the most admired and defended of classic writers but it is difficult to make him seem consistently "healthy."

More recent but not contemporary examples of "sick" humor are also not hard to find and Ambrose Bierce will supply half a dozen. I think for instance of one piece called "An Unsuccessful Conflagration" in which a wife-murderer bewails the bad luck that overcame him because he put the *corpus delecti* in a cabinet he didn't know was fireproof.

Some years ago a psychoanalyst solemnly warned parents against *Alice in Wonderland* as a dangerous invitation to neurosis because it involves a constantly recurring "threat to the integrity of the body" and thus encourages a typical neurotic anxiety. What, I wonder, would he have thought of Mark Twain's sketch, "Amelia's Unfortunate Young Man." Amelia's fiancé, one Williamson Breckinridge Carruthers, is an outstanding example of what the psychiatrists call "the accident prone." He catches smallpox which destroys his manly beauty and erysipelas which makes him blind in one eye. He loses one arm by the premature explosion of a firecracker, the other by falling into a well while watching a balloon ascension. Still later he loses both legs. Then: "Shortly before the time set for the nuptials another disaster occurred. There was but one man scalped by the Owen's River Indians last year. That man was Williamson Breckinridge Carruthers of New Jersey. He was hurrying home with happiness in his heart, when he lost his hair forever, and in that hour he almost cursed the mistaken mercy that had spared his head." Mark Twain's problem as an editor is to advise the young lady whether she should or should not marry the unfortunate young man and it involves, as the conscientious editor says, "The lifelong happiness of a woman, and that of nearly two thirds of a man." "It does not seem to me," is his conclusion, "that there is very much risk . . . because if he sticks to his singular propensity for damaging himself every time he sees a good opportunity, his next experience is bound to finish him, and then you are safe married or single. If married, the wooden legs and such other valuables as he may possess revert to the widow. . . ."

Gruesome and therefore, I suppose, "sick" humor is at the moment exceedingly popular with children and in fact it was, I think, from childish lips that I first heard it in its modern form. Only recently a ten-year-old acted out for me with great glee the tale of a little boy who returned crying from school because his companions had called him "a three-headed monster." His mother (distributing three properly placed pats) replies: "There . . . there . . . there." Yet even from the mouths of babes—who are notoriously not squeamish in such matters—I have never heard anything more continuously and cumulatively heartless than Mark Twain's tale. I don't think, nevertheless, that I have been brutalized or corrupted by it. In fact, I regard it as one of the most overwhelmingly hilarious pieces of prose I have ever read. How that can be some reader may be able to explain. I cannot.

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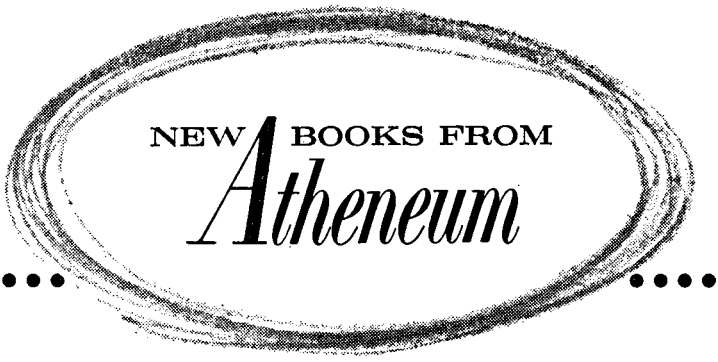

A New England Reader

Edited with introductions by VAN WYCK BROOKS

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The Parchment Barriers

EDMOND CAHN

THERE IS NO DENYING that the twentieth century has been almost continually in contempt of court. With little tact and less mercy, it has disclosed one after another of the seamy aspects of judicial office and the judicial process. It continues its revelations relentlessly. Unfolding immediately before our eyes is one of its greatest dramas—I might almost say, one of its greatest tragedies—the degradation of law, the courts and the judiciary in the Republic of South Africa.

Most of us are acquainted with the South African Government's general policy of apartheid, with some of its practical details, and with its blighting effect on the social, economic, political and moral status of the country. But few of us have attempted to put ourselves in the position of a decent South African judge whose very office calls on him to enforce the laws and regulations of apartheid hour by hour and day by day.

For Americans, it is important to remember that apartheid does not even pretend equivalence to the doctrine of "separate but equal" that our Supreme Court repudiated once and for all in 1954. Apartheid is a throwback well enough, but not to the early part of the twentieth century or the later part of the nineteenth; if we desire an analogy in American history, we must term it a throwback to the period before the Civil War. In short, what has befallen the South African native is a status not merely of segregation but also of peonage and involuntary servitude.

Every native is required to have with him at all times a so-called "reference book" or "passbook" with an identity card, data covering his employment, and information about his agricultural classifi-

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cation, plus a whole dossier of permits and official certificates. Every year many thousands of natives are arrested under the regulations, incarcerated in private jails built by the farmers' associations, summarily sentenced to prison terms, and then rented out by the farmers' associations or by the Prisons Department at a price that, according to a recent study, ranged from nine pence to two shillings per day per convict.

Ten years ago the Government extended the "reference book" or "passbook" system to include women. Showing the kind of spirit we should expect of women, spontaneous demonstrations and passbook bonfires broke out in all parts of the Union. Thereupon the Government canceled the old-age pensions of the protesting women and even the pensions of their husbands and fathers. It refused to accept tax payments from the husbands and fathers, thus leaving them open to criminal prosecution for failing to pay taxes. Women without passes could not participate in legal marriage. They were denied the right to medical care. In addition the courts sent the women to jail on the theory that in burning the passbooks they had destroyed government property.

The apartheid policy reaches implacably into every aspect of social life. The churches of the country were instructed to enforce it and when all protested except the Nationalists' Church, the law shifted the main burden of enforcement to the natives, under criminal penalties. According to a recent statute, a court may punish a clergyman, even to the extent of whipping, if, actuated by religious faith and conscience, he advises his flock not to let apartheid hold sway within the walls of the church.

By now there is not an institution of society or area of activity that apartheid has not infected. One might imagine, for example, that taxation at least would be the same for the natives as for the whites; after all, pounds, shillings and pence mean as much and as little to the government, whoever may pay them. Money does not know differences between races; nor does it share the nightmare fears that can drive a government to racial persecution. If anything is neutral, it is money.

But not in South Africa! In South Africa even money and gov-

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ernment taxes are race-conscious. A white man pays his income tax on net income while a native pays his on gross income without deductions or exemptions. I suppose there are two possible reasons for this: one is that the natives may as well give their money to the Government because they are not permitted to do much else with it; the other is that they ought to pay higher taxes because they get so many special favors, benefits and protections from the Government. Whoever can believe that this system makes sense can believe anything; he can even believe that South Africa, alone in the world, is somehow exempt from the laws of retribution that govern the destinies of men and nations.

While the persecution continues and the regulations become more inhumane, cruel and sadistic year by year, what have the judges of South Africa been doing? Let me say at the outset that although the judges have furnished no instance or token of true egalitarianism, they have made a general record of fairness, decency and moderation. Some observers tell us that recent appointments to the bench have been confined to extreme Nationalists and have impaired the previous quality of the courts. Whatever this may augur for the future, it is only fair to say that during the past crucial decade most of the judges have done what they could.

The Nationalist Government came into power in 1948. Since the overwhelming majority of the natives had long since been deprived of the right to vote, the only important impediment that remained on the scene consisted in the limited voting rights of the so-called "coloured" group, the descendants of unions between Malays or Europeans and Hottentots or Bantus. The qualified males among the "coloured" group had good reason to feel secure in their right to vote, since the South Africa Act guaranteed this right. The South Africa Act also provided that only a two-thirds majority of both houses of Parliament sitting together could amend the clause that contained the guarantee.

In 1951 the Nationalists pushed an act through Parliament to disenfranchise the "coloured" voters. The highest court (which they call their "appellate division") unanimously struck down the law as unconstitutional because it had not been passed by the re-

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quired two-thirds vote of the combined houses of Parliament. Infuriated by the decision, the Parliament passed a law declaring itself to be the highest court in the land, dubbing itself "the High Court of Parliament," and claiming the right to reverse what the appellate division had decided. The judges of the appellate division responded like men. They held this law to be unconstitutional.

It was an unequal contest, and the judges must have sensed that sooner or later they would have to retreat before the Nationalist juggernaut. The Nationalists' next step was predictably obvious. They simply passed a law that greatly increased the membership of the South African Senate, then packed the Senate with a flood of Nationalist additions, and thus obtained the two-thirds vote in the combined houses that was constitutionally indispensable. In 1957, when this maneuver came before the appellate division, the judges, with a single dissent, yielded to it. It was a transparent fraud, a grave political injustice and an insult to the spirit of their constitution. But it did conform to the letter of the law and, when one considers how long the appellate division offered the example of an inspiring resistance and how dismally the majority of the white population failed to rise to the occasion and rally behind the example, one can only bemoan the demise of the rule of law in South Africa.

What is a decent man in a judicial robe to do under circumstances like these? Almost everything that could be done was done. For example, particularly in the early years of apartheid the judges assumed that the Government meant to treat the natives fairly and humanely, and if a statute said nothing on the subject, the judges interpreted it as imposing such requirements and standards. But this never succeeded long. The Government invariably responded by amending the law in such a way as to make perfectly clear that they did not intend any such restraint as the judges had inferred. On the contrary, they explicitly announced an opposite purpose.

For a while, when a Government bureaucrat threatened to remove a native from his place and home or from the neighbor-

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hood in which he earned his living, the judges would issue an injunction forbidding the removal until a court hearing could be held on its legality. This help too was soon stifled. In 1956 the Nationalist Parliament passed a law prohibiting all natives who were threatened with ejection, removal or arrest for the purpose of ejection or removal, from obtaining any injunction that might interfere with the execution of the administrator's order.

What is a judge to do? For hundreds of years the tradition that these judges inherited had been admonishing them that the voice of Parliament was the law, and the only legitimate law, of the land. Ever since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the struggle for political liberty had taken the form of a struggle for parliamentary supremacy. A parliament was the only offset, the only counterweight to the absolute power of Tudors, Stuarts or the House of Hanover.

The judge's function, they had been told a thousand times, was not to legislate, but only to enforce the statutes he received from the Parliament. To set up his own ideals and standards against those furnished by the legislature not only would be undemocratic, it would be a breach of ethics, a violation of duty, a usurpation.

At first the Nationalist storm—like Hitler's and Mussolini's too—did not seem so very ominous. Exercising a judicious moderation, the judges must have assumed that they could weather it. They must have believed that it would subside, that campaign slogans would be moderated in the Nationalists' practical actions and that equilibrium and sobriety would soon return. But what can the judges believe now?

What are they to do? Some—probably an increasing number—experience no pangs of conscience or moral dilemma, since they are themselves products of the apartheid policy. Others may remain mute out of sheer anxiety, conscious that the nation has embarked on a suicidal course and that they and their families are being swept to a general destruction. If they resign from the bench, the Government will replace them with its rabid zealots. Perhaps, if they remain at their posts, they may find opportunities to temper the harshness of decrees. But even as they reassure themselves in

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this fashion, they must wonder whether the reassurance is not mere rationalization and turpitude of conscience. Meanwhile, new laws and regulations close in on them from day to day. For example, under the so-called Sabotage Act of 1962, a native who only goes on strike for better wages or living conditions can be held to have committed sabotage, which is punishable by death. At what point does one halt and refuse when one has already gone so far and acquiesced in so much?

In this condition of affairs the usual voices will be heard advocating that we return to natural law and rely on it to cure the maladies of the age. They will recommend that the South African judges resolve the dilemma simply by declaring that the apartheid legislation, in all its roots and branches, violates natural law and is therefore no law at all. Natural law, they tell us, is the panacea.

The sad truth is that natural law is no more dependable than other widely advertised panaceas. It boasts an old and noteworthy tradition, going back at least as far as the ancient Stoics. In Grotius' version it helped to rationalize the beginnings of international law. In John Locke's version it furnished our Founding Fathers with the ideology they needed to justify the Declaration of Independence. We owe gratitude to the long line of libertarians and egalitarians who expressed their ideals in the language of natural law.

But gratitude, becoming though it is, is no substitute for honest and realistic thinking. History shows us that natural law is a flag that anyone can nail to his mast. It has been used to justify slavery as well as freedom, persecution as well as fairness, exploitation as well as equality. In ancient Athens the Sophists contended that nothing conformed so much to natural law as homosexuality, else why would so many men and women practice it? As for the apartheid program in South Africa, cannot the Nationalists contend, as Plato did, that only those whom nature has endowed with superior ethnic stock and qualified to rule should exercise political power? How often have tyrants boasted that the strong are designed by nature to dominate the weak? Aristotle in his day, Cicero in his

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and John C. Calhoun in his were willing to defend the institution of slavery on the ground that some men and some nations were slaves by nature. The history of the tradition proves that natural law will vouch for any proposition in the whole register of moral values—from the saintly all the way down to the very worst.

Since natural law systems are so numerous and diverse, one wonders how they dare lay claim, as they do, to being fixed, eternal and immutable. On certain psychological types the effect of the mere claim is curiously soothing. The sequence of verbal sedatives —words like "fixed, eternal and immutable"—seems to bring an almost hypnotic repose to minds that are troubled in a world of flux. If you are desperately unsure about your convictions, it may relax and comfort you to call them laws of nature and thereby summon the whole physical universe to their support. Oddly enough, at the other extreme, if you feel quite dogmatic about your convictions, you are likely to do much the same thing, that is, insist that whatever you believe the entire cosmos is required to practice. Thus, at least in our time, many statements of natural law theory amount to a sort of cosmic imperialism, taking in more territory than the Russian claims to the moon. It makes no difference whether what they cloak is an extreme incertitude or an extreme certitude, for both of these may be symptoms of one and the same pathological condition.

The only natural law precepts that possess even a specious certainty and stability are those proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church. As anyone can see, when the Church gives doctrinal status to so-called propositions of natural law, what looks like certainty and uniformity is due not at all to natural law but to the Church, the authority of the Church and the discipline of the Church. Non-Catholics also accept many of these propositions, like the contents of the Ten Commandments—not as doctrines of the Church or of natural law, but as good, sound moral principles. On the other hand, non-Catholics may vehemently reject some of them, such as the proposition that the law of nature and sound morals forbid the use of contraceptives. The uniformity does not reside in natural law but in the specific ecclesiastical institution that declares it.

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Outside the Catholic Church there are countless competing natural law systems, as many, in fact, as there are writers on the subject. Hence the only sensible way for a secular judge to ascertain whether the claims of natural law have any worth is to take a practical test case and see what it shows. Putting the matter concretely: If, as its adherents contend, natural law could solve the judges' problem in South Africa, how did it solve the similar problem of Catholic judges in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy? Let us look at the record.

What use did the German judges, Catholic or non-Catholic, make of natural law? What did they do with natural law when they were confronted with the cruel legislation of the Hitler regime? A German expert reports: "Two groups deserve the place of honor among those who made their scholarship subservient to the Nazi ends: the . . . biologists and the jurists. . . . The jurists . . . spared no effort in molding the abstruse ideas of the new rulers into clear-cut articles of law and directives and in defending the legality of the measures taken." Another German expert says: "The whole profession is to be blamed for a high degree of guilt and for having brought great disaster upon itself and the German people." A third expert writes: "They acted as 'yes-men.' Instead of leading in the field of at least intellectual resistance to a criminal system, they readily joined it as followers and in quite a few instances even as activists. In the prolific literature of the German Resistance, little if anything can be read about the members of the legal profession. Most, if not all, German jurists of the Hitler period were far from becoming martyrs in the defense of justice. Quite a few of them acted as hangman's assistants in the extermination of justice. . . ."

Suppose we turn our eyes to Fascist Italy where it can be said that all of the judges were fully conversant with the doctrine of natural law. What do we find there? As you will recall, Mussolini eventually installed the entire fabric of the infamous Nazi Nuremberg laws. According to a prominent Italian jurist, Professor Paolo Barile of the University of Siena, no one can remember a single instance of a judge's offering his resignation or making any other gesture that might have served the purpose of protest. No single judge refused to apply a Fascist law on the ground that it violated

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the law of nature. Professor Barile concludes: "It does not seem to me that the Italian judges made a better showing than the German judges." Yet had not the education of these judges, at least in its philosophical and ethical aspects, been saturated with natural law? It is a woeful record, in Italy as in Germany, and a humiliating commentary on the pretensions of natural law. The entire episode proves that Judge Jerome Frank was right when he remarked, "Man does not find his 'oughts' spelled out for him in nature, he puts them there."

If natural law furnishes no remedy for the South African judges, what about the common law? Did not Lord Coke say in a famous dictum that an act of Parliament that violated the common law would be pronounced null and void? Yes, he did utter such a dictum, but for the ensuing three hundred years the law of England has uniformly contradicted it. To the British judge the voice of Parliament has long since become the voice of God. Whatever Parliament may ordain, no matter how repressive or unjust, becomes the law of the land. British judges have allowed themselves to become subservient to every passing majority in Parliament.

This subservience is so extreme in England that the judges will not even move the common law forward by reconsidering and overruling any of their old decisions that were mistaken in the first place or became obsolete. If Parliament does not correct them, the old unsuitable precedents must go on forever. Recently Lord Justice Devlin summarized the situation as follows: "The common law has now, I think, no longer the strength to provide any satisfactory solution to the problem of keeping the executive . . . under appropriate control." He recognized that the attitude of the British judges provided what he called "nothing but a death certificate" for the common law. If the common law of England cannot even survive, how can it furnish judges with the intellectual principles and moral courage that they would need to defy an act of legislation?

Shortly before our nation was founded, a Swiss political scientist named Delolme uttered an aphorism that has been repeated ever since. He said, "The English Parliament can do everything,

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except making a woman a man, or a man a woman." As though this statement did not go far enough, twentieth-century English jurists protest against Delolme's exception because, they insist, the legislation of Parliament can treat a woman like a man and a man like a woman. Quite a thought! If *this* is what Parliament has been attempting in recent years, it may account for the interesting confusion we observe in certain social relationships. It may also explain the themes of many current books and dramas. Parliament omnicompetent? Nonsense; like the American Congress, it is often so incompetent that one is tempted to exclaim, as Horace Walpole did shortly after Delolme's statement, "There is nothing a majority in Parliament can do, but outvote a minority."

There are several important respects in which the English notion of freedom would be sorely inadequate for Americans. Of course it was inadequate in 1776 when we declared our independence, in 1787 when we drafted our Constitution, and in 1789 when we drafted our Bill of Rights. Despite England's subsequent advances and various shortcomings of our own, the standards of liberty that Englishmen seem to accept are not high enough for us.

Let me take a few elementary examples. The fact that England has an officially established church, together with all its practical implications, is a condition obnoxious to American principles. We should regard any form of establishment as violating the rights of conscience of all citizens, Christians and Jews, Protestants and Catholics, believers, unbelievers and doubters. Establishment is so oppressive an institution that it does not even spare those persons who belong to the established church. It wrongs everyone, every conscience. Not many years ago the clergy of the Church of England, after spending some fourteen years in preparing a revised prayer book, submitted the revisions to Parliament, which English law required them to do. Naturally, many of the members of Parliament did not belong to the established church; many were Protestant Dissenters, Catholics, Jews, atheists. In two successive Parliaments the House of Commons, so constituted, rejected the revisions that had been solemnly approved by the Church's House of Bishops, House of Clergy and House of Laity. This sort of political inter-

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ference in the very means of worship would be intolerable to Americans.

Consider other freedoms. In England it is still necessary to obtain the Lord Chamberlain's license before one can present a play to the public. In the United States all such previous restraints on the performance of a drama are unconstitutional.

The authority of the English judges has succumbed not only to Parliament but also to any executive official whom Parliament may choose to clothe with irresponsible power. For example, in 1939 by authority of Parliament it was decreed that if the Home Secretary had reasonable cause to believe any person to be of hostile origin or associations and that it was necessary to exercise control over him, the person could be arrested and held in prison or wherever the Home Secretary might choose to detain him. Various persons having been imprisoned in this cavalier way, one of them, a man by the name of Liversidge, applied to the Courts, claiming that he was held illegally and asking merely to be told the grounds on which the Home Secretary thought he had reasonable cause to hold him. Liversidge lost his case in the King's Bench Division, lost again in the Court of Appeal and lost (4 to 1) in the House of Lords. The House of Lords decided that an English court could not even request the grounds of the Home Secretary's belief, much less ascertain whether they were reasonable. The lone dissenter, Lord Atkin, protested that the arguments in the case "might have been addressed acceptably to the Court of King's Bench in the time of Charles I." And these were the arguments that prevailed.

Civil liberties are not dead or moribund in England. But since Parliament can ignore Magna Carta whenever it chooses, they are neither robust nor secure enough to provide a standard for others to emulate. Not by the natural law, not by the common law, will judges rescue their integrity in our time.

Surely we cannot leave the judicial office in such a slough of despond, nor can we hope to obtain conscientious judges if we subject them to the performance of morally repulsive duties. There must be some way out.

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I believe that there is and that the essence of the matter begins to emerge as soon as we ask how American judges have managed to escape this sort of moral dilemma. American judges have indeed escaped it, and the means is quite plain. It consists in what the men of the eighteenth century described condescendingly as "parchment barriers." We have gradually learned to prize the "parchment barriers" as our most vital possessions, vital in the sense that our national life depends on them, equally vital in the sense that we must be prepared, if necessary, to lay down our lives for them. We call these "parchment barriers" our Bill of Rights.

Four men at the beginning of our history did all that was needful to make the office of the twentieth-century American judge morally viable as the office of the South African judge cannot be. It is pleasant to note that these four were not of one political faction or party, but that two of them were Federalists and conservatives, and the other two Democratic Republicans and libertarians.

Suppose we consider the conservatives first. The Constitution having been drafted in Philadelphia in 1787, Hamilton, Madison and Jay advocated its adoption in *The Federalist* papers. In May, 1788, Hamilton published the famous *Federalist* No. 78, which expounded the American doctrine of judicial review in terms that hold true to this day. Pointing out that the Constitution forbade Congress to pass bills of attainder and *ex post facto* laws, he said, "Limitations of this kind can be preserved in practice no other way than through the medium of the courts of justice; whose duty it must be to declare all acts contrary to the manifest tenor of the constitution void. Without this, all the reservations of particular rights or privileges would amount to nothing." Years later, in 1803, Chief Justice Marshall would follow the line of Hamilton's reasoning in the 78th *Federalist* and issue the landmark decision of *Marbury v. Madison.*

On the libertarian side the record is equally clear. As soon as Jefferson, who was serving as American Minister in Paris, received a copy of the draft Constitution, he demanded that it be corrected to include a bill of rights. He wrote to Madison, "A bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth."

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Spurred by Jefferson's incessant demand, the supporters of the Philadelphia draft pledged themselves to add a bill of rights immediately after ratification, and the task of redeeming the pledge fell on James Madison. Madison's letters show that he understood a bill of rights would be "a standard for trying the validity of public acts, and a signal for rousing and uniting the superior forces of the community"; but, possibly because he was not a lawyer, Madison did not at first perceive that the judges might play a leading role in enforcing the Bill of Rights. That is why, in a letter dated March 15, 1789, Jefferson called Madison's attention to this all-important factor. He wrote, "In the arguments in favor of a declaration of rights, you omit one which has great weight with me, the legal check which it puts into the hands of the judiciary. This is a body, which if rendered independent, and kept strictly to their own department, merits great confidence for their learning and integrity. . . . There is a remarkable difference between the characters of the Inconveniences which attend a Declaration of rights, and those which attend the want of it. The inconveniences of the Declaration are that it may cramp government in its useful exertions. But the evil of this is shortlived, moderate, and reparable. The inconveniences of the want of a Declaration are permanent, afflicting, and irreparable."

Jefferson's letter took a long, long time to cross the Atlantic. Fortunately the House of Representatives, with a casualness that would seem incredible if it had not been repeated so often on other occasions, did not give Madison the floor to submit the proposed bill of rights until June 8, 1789. Jefferson's letter had finally reached New York in a diplomatic pouch on June 1st. Thus when Madison rose to address the House and submit the Bill of Rights, he was prepared to depend on the judges. He told Congress, "If [the basic rights] are incorporated into the constitution, independent tribunals of justice will consider themselves in a peculiar manner the guardians of those rights; they will be an impenetrable bulwark against every assumption of power in the legislative or executive; they will be naturally led to resist every encroachment upon rights expressly stipulated for in the constitution by the dec-

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laration of rights." Jefferson, who demanded the Bill of Rights, and Madison, who composed it, relied explicitly on the judges to make it a living reality.

In fairness I should also mention an important incident during the Constitutional Convention of 1787 that scholars have generally overlooked. When the Convention took up the famous clause that forbids *ex post facto* laws (laws making an act criminal after it is done although it was innocent when it was done), several delegates objected that the provision would be ineffectual and futile. But Hugh Williamson of North Carolina swung a majority of seven states to three in favor of the clause. How did he convince them that it would have practical value? He said, "The judges can take hold of it." Here, in this incident of August 22, 1787, even before the time of *The Federalist* papers and the Bill of Rights, we see Americans depending on the judges and consciously furnishing them with an authoritative text.

Now the critical difference becomes evident between the decent American judge and his South African counterpart. It does not consist of a difference of convictions or principles; it consists rather in the plain fact that the American judge who desires to preserve liberty and equality has been provided with a constitutional text, and the South African has not.

Why should a text be so important to a judge? This is one of the most interesting questions in the philosophy of law. Without an authoritative text the modern democratic judge may or may not be willing to overrule an earlier *judicial* decision; he will certainly decline to overrule or annul a *legislative* decision.

The modern democratic judge shrinks from the burden of unlimited authority that the advocates of a so-called higher natural law would confer on him. Since there is no authoritative secular text in which he can find the rules of natural law, the proposed authority would be boundless. It would leave him at large, free to convert his whims and prejudices into the supreme law of the land. He knows enough about the prejudices of his brothers on the bench to mistrust his own. He needs a text as a chart to control their will and his.

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Once he receives a formal text, the judge's position is entirely different. He feels equipped with legitimate standards of decision and ready to perform his functions independently and manfully.

To the judge the text represents both authority and responsibility. It is his authority not only for what he undertakes to decide, but also for how he ultimately decides it. It is the criterion of his responsibility because it enables the parties before him and the general public to ascertain whether he has decided correctly, reasonably, rightly. Thus the text is the beginning and also the end of his process of judging. As he judges by it, he knows he will be judged by it. Gladly he welcomes parchment barriers.

Although America's parchment barriers have not always succeeded (neither Jefferson nor Madison believed that they always would), they have served so well that they need no extraneous justification. It is enough that the people need and will continue to need them. Nevertheless we discover now that they do have a justification beyond anything contemplated by the Founding Fathers. The twentieth century has demonstrated that the judges as well as the people require them. Humane judges must have the authority of a bill of rights.

If this is so (and surely the evidence of current history shows that it is), then every democratic nation owes its judges a bill of rights with which they can safeguard basic human privileges and immunities. In the deepest moral sense, it is no longer optional to adopt or not to adopt a national bill of rights; it has become a categorical duty. The American judge can look compassionately at his brother on the South African bench and say, "There, but for the Bill of Rights, go I."

The twentieth century impels us beyond even Jefferson's position. In his time it was enough to say, "The people are entitled to a bill of rights against every government on earth." Facing the inhumanities of our own day we must add, "and judges too are entitled to a bill of rights against every democratic legislature and executive on earth." The experience of the South African judges points an unmistakable moral: Every democratic nation owes a solemn obligation to its judges to adopt a written bill of rights beyond

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the reach of legislature and executive. In the years since World War II most of the new democratic nations in Europe and Asia have acknowledged the obligation and followed the American lead. Parchment barriers, indeed! Yes, they are only parchment barriers, these guarantees and bills of rights, never perfect, never self-executing, always precarious as all human arrangements must be; but in them the judge can find his textual authority and personal valor and moral salvation.

It is time to examine the home scene. How firm are our own parchment barriers and how clear are the freedoms that were inscribed on them? Are the guarantees still black and bold and sharp as ever on the parchment of the Bill of Rights?

One would expect the answer to be a resounding "yes"—not only because so many of us care deeply about our liberties; not only because America stands at the bar of destiny in our time, to prevail if we retain our freedoms and to succumb ignominiously if we part with them; but also because no nation in all history has been so richly endowed with liberty-loving judges on its highest tribunal. Think of the judicial libertarians we had during recent decades—Holmes, Brandeis, Stone, Hughes, Murphy, Rutledge; and those now on the bench—Black, Douglas, Warren, Brennan! Not being ashamed of freedom, they are able to enforce the Bill of Rights with the vigor it deserves. As we need the text, so too do we need men like them. The personal element is always consequential in the exercise of judgment. Hence the superiority of our jurists has given us a significant national advantage.

Yet, notwithstanding the quality of our libertarian judges, there is no denying that nowadays the civil liberties of Americans stand in grave jeopardy. I do not think that the Bill of Rights ever faced a more serious menace. The threat does not come from overseas or from any foreign source—would that it did; we could easily repel it. It comes from within our own borders and from certain of our own judges, who are widely echoed by various lawyers, professors and journalists. It is the threat of the "ink-eradicator" philosophy.

What is the "ink-eradicator" philosophy and what does it pro-

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pose to accomplish? Its immediate objective is simple to state. It aims to erase the words of the First Amendment from the parchment of our Bill of Rights. The First Amendment guarantees us separation of church and state, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of peaceable assembly and—by implication—freedom of association. The "ink-eradicators" have long since served notice that they disapprove of the whole notion of a written Bill of Rights and would prefer to eliminate the entire document. But at the moment they are concentrating their efforts on the First Amendment, shrewdly recognizing that if that goes, the rest will quickly follow. After all, if the people do not fight to defend guarantees of religious freedom and press freedom, they will scarcely cavil over a few other deletions.

The "eradicator" school evidently believe they are making substantial progress, for they have recently intensified their campaign. They used to be content with disparaging the First Amendment as "doctrinaire"; now their epithet for it is "obsolete." In all apparent seriousness, they expect us to believe that the First Amendment guarantees of our liberties have somehow become obsolete.

How they do argue! One would imagine that all the Sophists of ancient Hellas had been resurrected and had begun forthwith to display their skills. Equipped with every solvent known to modern semantics and communications theory, they tell and keep telling us that the language of the First Amendment is the least and last of our serious concerns. They insist that all words are too imprecise to be taken for what they say, that every affirmative may just as well be a negative and every negative an affirmative, and that only the naive among us will permit a categorical prohibition to stand in the way of what seems expedient at any given moment. Words have so little meaning in their view that one wonders how they can use words to tell us so.

What do the "ink-eradicators" say about the First Amendment? The Amendment itself is couched in what the rest of us might consider rather direct terms. It provides that "Congress shall make no law" on certain subjects that the Founding Fathers considered sacred and indispensable to human dignity. Although the Amend-

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ment says precisely that "Congress shall make *no* law" in these fields, the "ink-eradicators" claim that it means something quite different. They claim that when it says "Congress shall make no law," it means "Congress shall make no *unreasonable* law."

So far, so ominous. But the next question is: What is an unreasonable law? They have a quick answer: A law, they insist, is unreasonable only if a majority of the judges decide it is. Suppose, then, that Congress proceeds to flout the First Amendment and abridge our freedom of religion or speech or press, how are the judges to determine whether the law is reasonable or unreasonable? This, they reply, is easy: The law *must* be reasonable or Congress would not have enacted it. It would be an insult to the members of Congress, for whom all patriotic Americans feel a reverence bordering on idolatry, were the judges to take the First Amendment literally and nullify such a law.

By this sort of reasoning the words of the First Amendment can be made pale and shadowy indeed. Some of us cannot acquiesce. We protest that the guarantees in the Bill of Rights are still meaningful, still worth the struggles, sacrifices and martyrdoms our ancestors underwent for them. Consequently they label us as naive and doctrinaire, and charge that we hold a heretical belief in "absolutes."

It is well known that our "eradicator" friends experience shudders of terror at the mere sound of that wicked word "absolute," which, as we have learned to expect, they habitually use without attempting to define it. They do not even distinguish between "absolute" in abstract theology or theoretical ethics, on the one hand, and "absolute" in the concrete, working dispositions of law, on the other. "Absolute"—what an incantation they make of it! If the rest of us are accepting "absolutes" because we believe that a solemn legal prohibition *can* mean literally and precisely what it says, what else would they have us do? What kind of society would there be without some modicum of fixed legal commands, positive and negative? When the law forbids bribing a judge, does it mean only "unreasonable" bribes; when it forbids assassinating a Senator, does it mean only "unreasonable" assassinations? When it frowns on

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rapes, does it mean only "unreasonable" rapes? Words, our modern Sophists tell us, never convey precise meaning; prohibitions, they say, must never be taken literally; how, then, would they enjoy a trip by plane if the pilot up front and the technician in the control tower adopted their philosophy?

One would imagine that the "ink-eradicators" might take warning from the desperate spectacle of the South African judges—textless, helpless, chartless, adrift on a sea of individual and social injustice. Yet the example seems to have taught them nothing; on the contrary, as the plight of South African freedom has steadily worsened, the Sophists have increased their scoffings and intensified their propaganda against the First Amendment. Why? What are their motives? In truth, we do not know. We know only that their philosophy, whatever may be its psychological springs, is cynical in approach, corrosive in effect, in all unwholesome.

America is not South Africa; let it not become South Africa. Through no effort or merit of our own, we, the people of this fortunate country, have inherited the radiant text of our Bill of Rights. For nearly two hundred years it has been our proudest possession, the supreme covenant that binds all of us to enlightenment and justice. Without it our dream, the age-old libertarian dream, is lost and we are nothing. With it we can rise from the bed of doubt, gird ourselves with hope and show the world what it means to be free.

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American Students and the "Political Revival"

KENNETH KENISTON

THE APOLITICAL STANCE OF AMERICAN YOUTH is something of a puzzle. Our liberal political tradition once led us to believe that intelligent political concern went hand in hand with public well-being and education; and yet despite prosperity and the highest level of education in the world, our young men and women remain overwhelmingly uninterested in the state of the nation and the world. Even in a time of "political revival" and "revolt on the campus," the highest estimates of politically active students range around ten percent; while at most colleges, ninety, or ninety-five, or ninety-nine percent of the student body take no active part in any cause or organization that could be called truly political. In other nations—both the highly industrialized and the rapidly developing—a much larger proportion of educated young men and women are involved in political life, actively debate the issues of the day and demonstrate their vigorous approval or disapproval of the trends of the times. In Korea and Turkey, successful revolutions have recently been led by students; in Japan, as

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This paper was originally read at the University of Michigan Summer Session Conference, "American Youth, 1962." Mr. Keniston writes: "I am especially indebted to David Riesman and the staff of his Harvard University course, Social Sciences 136, for the opportunity to discuss many of the questions here considered, as well as for some of the specific interpretations I have suggested. Larry Schiff's on-going studies of student political participation, Erik Erikson's analyses of the relationship of ideology and identity, and Joseph Adelson's perceptive discussion of 'The Teacher as a Model' (AS: Summer, 1961) have also been helpful. A similar account of 'elite' youth appeared in 'Social Change and Youth in America' (*Dædalus*, Winter, 1962)."

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in Latin America and Africa, student demonstrations can affect national policy; and even in industrialized Europe, educated youth is more politically conscious and active than in America. It almost appears that affluence and education have a negative effect on political involvement, at least in America.

The puzzle is deepened when we recall the close historical association between rapid social change and a politically active youth. It is an axiom of historical observation that drastic social change puts enormous stresses on the individual, that the aspirations of young people often—indeed usually—outrun the facts of society during such periods, and that a radically altered social scene makes impossible any easy continuity between the generations. All of these factors increase the likelihood that young men and women will attempt to change the society to conform with their own democratic and often radical aspirations. And in this country during the past hundred years we have witnessed precisely the kind of social transformations that elsewhere led to a politically active youth. Beginning with the spurt of industrialization after the Civil War, American society has undergone and continues to undergo deep transformations, no less drastic because they are no longer reflected in the indices of economic output, and no less affecting because we have grown used to them. Yet despite this, American youth is predominantly apolitical, and has been so almost without interruption since the foundation of this nation.

A full explanation of the predominantly apolitical outlook of American youth—as of the active participation in politics of an increasing few—would involve nothing less than a social and psychological history of this nation. Here I can only suggest one or two factors that have played a role in the development of this outlook and then, in the light of these factors, try to assess the meaning and prospects of the recent "revival" of political interest among students.

To understand so current a topic as the campus "political revival" and the inert student masses against which this "revival" takes place, we must take a long step backward to consider some of

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the factors that distinguish American social development from that of most other nations; for in them, I think, lies the key to understanding the apolitical outlook of today's young. For one, as many commentators on American life have noted, America never had a feudal past to overcome. If we define feudal broadly, so that it includes not only established aristocracies but land- and mine-owning oligarchies and colonial rulers, then there are only a handful of former British colonies that had the same fresh start that we did. Concretely, this has meant that Americans, from the beginning, have lacked clear and obvious targets for rebellion. Young people growing up in this country have, for one hundred and fifty years, found themselves *already* living in a nation whose major public values are still the mottoes of revolution elsewhere—equal rights, equal opportunities, justice under law and so on. Not that these values are always practiced—but at least they are subscribed to almost universally and probably practiced to a greater extent than in many countries. Thus, generations of young Americans awakened to consciousness to find themselves already living in a "post-revolutionary" world. If they remained dissatisfied, impoverished or underprivileged, there were no aristocrats, land-owners or colonial rulers to rebel against. Instead, Americans have always perceived their chief obstacle as some quality of their own like ignorance, laziness, bad luck or inexperience, chains that could be cast off by effort, by education or, in our own time, by psychotherapy.

A second relevant constant in American life is the anti-ideological bias of American thinking. Even Toqueville commented in the 1830's that Americans' passion for grand ideas was not matched by any parallel passion for translating these ideas into practice. And it has remained true, in general, that ideological speculations in this country have been a kind of game played by intellectuals who themselves often doubted their practicality on a large scale. For example, even though the founders of the utopian communities that dotted the countryside in the 1800's were discontented with the status quo, they did not attempt to change the whole society through revolution or political action as they might have done in an ideological nation like

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France or Germany. Rather, they withdrew from the wider society to set up their own private utopias. Americans who were explicitly disaffected have rarely attempted political action on a grand scale but have chosen instead for withdrawal, emigration or exemplary self-reform. As a nation, we are not only hostile to the translation of grand schemes into political reality, but, more important, it seldom even occurs to most of us that ideological (or even intellectual) considerations have much to do with the workings of political life.

This characteristic American distrust of grand political schemes, coupled with our fresh start as a nation, has given a peculiar and perhaps unique coloring to Americans' attitudes toward social change. It has meant that the burden of proof has always been on those who opposed or sought to direct the economic and social transformations of the nation. In countries with Establishments, whether of title, education, race or conquest, it has seemed quite natural that the original Establishment or its latter-day successor should seek to direct the changes of the nation's social face. And in such countries, the vestiges of the older "feudal" orders have often served as foci of opposition to the new, the modern and the untried. But in America, lacking such foci and mistrusting social planning, we have consistently preferred to let society run its "natural course," which has in practice meant that the needs of a burgeoning industry have usually been most heeded. To this fact we owe part of our industrial accomplishments and our high standard of living, which could not have been achieved without a people who were convinced that the new, the modern, the "latest" were good, and that what was old and established was "old-fashioned," "obsolete" and "outmoded." Concretely, this has meant that each new product, institution, custom or even value has been eagerly seized by a nation rushing to outgrow its yesterdays and hurrying to enter a future ever brighter than the present. In a word, Americans have been and continue to be on the side of change, and have considered it their obligation to make whatever accommodations were necessary to Progress.

In this continuing context of unopposed, undirected and

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highly valued social change, the last four generations of Americans have been formed. And, more important, their conceptions of themselves and their tasks as youths have been shaped by social definitions of youth that have been broadly consonant with this context of social change. Such social definitions exist unnoticed in every society, dictating what kinds of behavior are legitimate for youth—and when not legitimate, then expected, and when not expected, then at least comprehended by other members of society as signs of protest, illness or divine favor. A young man or woman who lives within the confines of these definitions is understandable and predictable to his fellows and (even more important to an adolescent) understandable and "normal" to himself; whereas one who deviates from the sheltering confines of such images is considered strange, erratic, weird (in our society, "un-American"), and eventually begins to wonder about his own normality. To "work" in the broader context of society, an image of youth must be broadly consonant with the basic values of the society and, furthermore, it must help the young to grow into adulthood, resolving the peculiar stresses of adolescence in that society and strengthening in each youth an attachment to the tasks that maturity will require.

In a complex and changing society like ours, two basic definitions of youth exist, each with many subvariants. These two images, which I will call youth as *apprenticeship for social mobility* and youth as *youth culture,* are very different in most ways. But both are consistent with American values about social change; both permit the resolution of some of the major problems created by rapid change, and—most relevant to this context—both discourage political activity among the young.

To understand the role played by these definitions of youth, we must consider in more detail the specific directions of social change in this country over the past hundred years or so. And on this point there is a good deal of consensus among historians and sociologists. Put very generally, we are moving from an economy of scarcity to one of relative affluence, from the takeoff point of rapid industrialization to an era of mass consumption, from basic

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production to service industries. Sociologically, this has meant a relative shift from individual entrepreneurship to bureaucratic corporations limited by government regulation, from the rugged competitiveness of the Protestant Ethic in the last century to the smoother group orientation of the Social Ethic in this century and, on the family front, from the more authoritarian entrepreneurial family to the newer, more team-minded bureaucratic family. And most important for the understanding of youth has been the shift in social character first discussed by Riesman—a shift from an organization of character based on internal standards of personal worth that lead to competitive achievement, from this inner-direction to the newer other-directed character based on sensitivity to the feelings of others and on interpersonal standards of worth.

The heyday of the older entrepreneurial society seems to have occurred in the northern United States during the decades of rapid industrialization following the Civil War; these years saw the transformation of this country from an agrarian into an industrial society. These were decades of very rapid social mobility, of fortunes quickly made and quickly lost in the next panic—a time much like our own when adults found themselves living in a kind of society their own parents had never dreamed of, and hence had not been able to prepare their children for. Comparable periods in Germany and Japan saw the rise of militant youth groups aiming at radical changes in the social organization of the nation; but of course in America there has never been any such movement.

Part of the explanation for the quiescence of American youth undoubtedly lies in the facts I have already mentioned: in America there was no feudal, preindustrial order to block the advancement or frustrate the democratic aspirations of the young; but in Japan and Germany such an order did exist, and did frustrate the dreams of radical youth. But even more important, I think, was the existence in this country of another mythical and to some extent real alternative to politics for youth—rapid social mobility. Horatio Alger is probably the best-known spokesman for this view. Recall the basic plot of his stories: his heroes were poor but

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honest lads who were befriended by a wealthy older man, a man successful and prosperous *within* the existing social order. The lads, partly by dint of their own drive and energy, but also with large amounts of assistance from the obliging older man, eventually take over the bank or company, marry the older man's lovely, rich daughter and become roaring successes. The presence of the helping older man is crucial here. Horatio Alger implies that if one's parents are inadequate models, others will act in their stead. Indeed Horatio Alger, like the motto, "from rags to riches," positively *urges* the young to abandon their rag-ridden parents and follow other, more modern and successful elders into the new world of riches. Generational discontinuity is of course one of the chief problems of rapid social change, in that parents can seldom serve as exemplars to their children; but here it is made a virtue. The young are told that the remedy for discontent is hard work *within* the existing system, which will reward the deserving according to their industry, ambition and honesty.

Although probably only a few young men took Horatio Alger literally, the general moral of his stories was widely accepted. Youth was defined as an apprenticeship for adulthood; the specific task of youth was to cultivate the many virtues and acquire the few skills needed for success in the upward road ahead. And so long as it remained credible, this definition of youth worked fairly well. It enjoined the young to answer discontent with hard work, to abandon the past willingly for greater goods ahead, and to view their schools and colleges as if they were the Pennsylvania Railroad Station, in Edgar Friedenberg's phrase. The only problem for a young man (although it was not always a small problem) was to locate the right track and stay on it to his destination. Education was above all a matter of memorizing the map and timetable, and getting out as quickly as possible for the main journey ahead. Furthermore, as long as many young men believed in the possibility and desirability of upward mobility and success, this definition of youth assured the society a goodly reserve of eager young men who were determined to abandon the past, quick to learn the techniques of the new society, convinced that it was to their own benefit to work hard, and sustained even

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in poverty by fantasies of success, luck and a helping hand ahead. And, finally, by transforming potential discontent and unrest into the struggle to get ahead *within* the system, this image of youth effectively prevented political involvement among the young.

But as we all now know, there were not enough kindly and helping bankers to go around, or enough thriving businesses to take over, or enough lovely bosses' daughters to marry. And, more important, American society has changed since Horatio Alger's day, so that its most visible, prestigeful positions are no longer the conspicuous castles of bank presidents and robber barons, but rather the discreetly restrained, steel-and-glass offices of executive vice-presidents, technical advisers, scientists in business and even, occasionally, of a college professor with a government grant. Increasingly in our present society, the older "entrepreneurial" virtues of thrift and determination, grit and gumption, are no longer enough; the newer requirements for prestige are at least a B.A., a certain personal sophistication, specialized technical competence, an acceptable wife and at least a good imitation of a "genuine interest in people." Then, too, the intensity of the drive to success and prestige has itself lessened. In a day of middle-class affluence, the push to escape the poverty and restriction of slum, farm or immigrant background has lessened, and people worry more, and longer, about *how* to live the rich full life with the goods they *already* possess—and even sometimes question whether it is all worth the effort to begin with. Horatio Alger and "from rags to riches" are tokens of a fast-disappearing day; and with them, the image of youth as an apprenticeship for upward mobility is waning too.

The definition of youth that in many places has replaced this older image is harder to pin down, harder even to find an adequate name for. I can only call it, in a cumbersome way, the image of youth as youth culture, and then try to make clear what I mean. The youth culture is the special set of mores, customs, roles and values of youth considered as a distinctive, separate age group. In many primitive societies youth is not so considered; on the contrary, youths are seen either as old children or as young

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adults, not as members of an age group who—simply because they are adolescents—are expected to behave in a way distinct from both children and adults. But in other societies, especially those like our own where the transition from childhood to adulthood is difficult, late adolescents and early adults are expected to behave in special, idiosyncratic ways that are symptomatic of their age.

In America it is probably best to speak of many youth cultures, rather than one, for under this rubric we must subsume a great many different phenomena: teen-agers, "Joe College" students, youthful beatniks, rock-and-rollers, juvenile delinquents. But, at the same time, all of these distinct cultures have certain common features. Talcott Parsons lists emphasis on physical attractiveness, irresponsibility, interest in athletics, repudiation of adult things—and to this list I would add other common characteristics, for example, a kind of hedonism of the moment, a reluctance to undertake long-range commitments, a high value placed on sensation, experience and excitement. F. Scott Fitzgerald's picture of Princeton before and after the First War came to epitomize an earlier, "flaming youth" version of youth culture. In our own day, we have more various and contrasting versions, ranging from the black-jacketed delinquent to the oversensitive Catcher in the Rye, from the misunderstood James Dean to the fun-and-football fraternity man. The particular group most relevant to a discussion of student politics is what could be called "elite youth"—that is, those educationally privileged young men and women who correspond in talent and intelligence to the most politically active students in other nations. It is from this group that tomorrow's leaders will most likely be drawn; and these young men and women usually act as pace-setting models to other students. Although such "elite" students are more articulate than most of their contemporaries, they often voice aspirations and ideas implicit in other versions of the youth culture, and a consideration of the most salient views of elite students may serve as summary of the outlooks of other American youth cultures as well.

One of the outstanding characteristics of many young people

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today is their apparent *lack of deep commitment to adult values.* A large number of young men and women are relatively alienated from their parents' conceptions of the world, disaffiliated from previous ideas of the good life. They often view the adult world with considerable lack of enthusiasm, seeing it as cold, mechanical, impersonal and overspecialized, lacking in qualities of dignity and vitality that might make commitment to it worthwhile. For some, it is very important to be "cool," and "coolness" involves, above all, lack of overt enthusiasm. This is not to say that students are cynical or calculating—indeed, most of them wish there were purposes to which they could wholeheartedly subscribe. When they see such purposes, they usually find them abroad, in the underdeveloped countries, which have become the last frontier and refuge of American idealism. When something like the Peace Corps comes along, a surprising number express a willingness to drop everything and join up. But usually, if they are enthusiastic about anything, it is about their steady girl friend, their role in the college dramatic society, about a piece of music, about a weekend with their friends. Yet the opposite side of the coin is that these same young men and women are surprisingly sane, level-headed and realistic—probably in many ways more "adult" than their parents were at their age. They are never given to fanaticism, indeed they have a sometimes paralyzing awareness of the world's complexity. They are well read and well informed; they are kind and tolerant and decent in their dealings with other people.

Secondly, I am struck with the *lack of rebelliousness* among today's college students. This is in a way surprising, because we are used to thinking that lack of commitment must mean rejection and rebellion. Indeed, in the classical stories of filial rebellion, where the son is in real danger of being forced to become like his father, he does rebel rather than accept this definition of himself. But many young men and women today simply see no possibility of being like their parents; the world of parents is so distant, so different, that it neither tempts nor threatens the young; and therefore rebellion is seldom necessary. On the contrary, many young people show a touching understanding for

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their parents' often hesitant efforts to counsel and advise them. Parents, too, usually sense, at some level, their own out-of-datedness to their children, and this awareness makes them reluctant to try to impose their own values. The result is a kind of unstated gentleman's agreement between the generations that neither will interfere with the other.

Such an agreement creates new problems, however, and leads directly to another characteristic of many students: their *lack of admired paternal figures.* Our modern literary heroes seldom have fathers at all; or when they do have biological fathers, these are portrayed as weak, ineffectual, absent or otherwise unable to fulfill the traditional psychological role of fathers as exemplars. Take Augie March or Holden Caulfield, consider the heroes of Arthur Miller's and Tennessee Williams' plays, or recall the types played by Jimmie Dean. None of these young men has a father who can act as a model or even as a target of rebellion—nor does he, like Horatio Alger's heroes, find an exemplary substitute. Here I think current fiction displays life writ large. One sometimes even hears students lament the fact that their parents give so little authoritative guidance: "If only they would tell me what *they* think I should do." Young men and women want and need models, both positive and negative, and they require older adults who will act as guardians to their identity while it is still fledgling. When such models and guardians are absent, the young feel—and indeed are—cheated.

Another outlook of many students—and here we move closer to politics—is a widespread feeling of *social powerlessness.* This involves politics, to be sure, but it extends far beyond it, to the point where many young people feel helpless to influence or direct any but the most personal and immediate spheres of their lives. The world appears to be a fluid and chaotic place; individuals seem the victims of colossal and impersonal historical forces which can seldom be understood and never controlled.

The most common response to this feeling of social powerlessness is what David Riesman has called *privatism.* Young people generally emphasize and value precisely those areas of life that are farthest from the wider society, and which therefore seem

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most manageable. Consider the matter of families: most young people want large families, they marry earlier than in the past, they are prepared to work very hard to create happy families, and they often value family closeness far more than meaningful work. Or, similarly, recall the emphasis many youths place on leisure: their eagerness to learn how to spend their leisure to good advantage, to find jobs with good vacations in areas where leisure time can be pleasantly spent. Indeed, I know several young men who anticipate working at their leisure with an intensity that will be quite lacking from their work itself. In both these areas, we see a search for private styles of life that will be predictable and under control.

Closely related to privatism is the *foreshortening of time span.* The most extreme form of this trend is found in the "beat" emphasis on present satisfactions, with an almost total refusal to consider past commitments or future consequences. In far less psychopathic form, a great many young people emphasize pursuits and interests that can be enjoyed for their own sake and in the present. The decline of the Protestant Ethic has brought a virtual disappearance of the idea of a Life Work, of the long-deferred goals and satisfactions of an earlier breed of Americans. Few young men and women have life goals that extend more than a few years ahead; most can see only as far as graduate school; and many drift into, rather than actively or consciously choose, their future careers.

In general, then, many college students have what can be called a *cult of experience,* which stresses, as one student put it, "the maximum possible number of sense experiences." Indeed, part of the fascination of the "beat generation" for college students lies in its unencumbered quest for kicks, for an intensification of private, present experience to almost unbearable degrees. Few students go this far, even though they may ride motorcycles, frequent coffee houses and sport beards. But other types of private experience less asocial than speed, sex and stimulants are sought nonetheless: the enjoyment of nature, the privacy of erotic love, the company of friends—these occupy a similar place in the hierarchy of values.

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At best, such a youth culture has important virtues for the individual as for the society, providing what Erik Erikson calls a "psycho-social moratorium," that is, a sanctioned time and place when the young can decide how, where—and even whether—they will fit into society. And, above all, it provides a breathing spell between childhood and adulthood, time to develop a sense of personal identity that will link the problematical individual social and national past with the uncertain future, and, hopefully, will enable the young to develop their own guidelines for commitment and action. Thus, the definition of youth as youth culture helps the young to cope with the stresses and strains created by rapid social change and, at the same time, to do so in a thoroughly apolitical way that will not rock the social or political boat.

The transition from apprenticeship to youth culture is, of course, far from a completed fact. At many colleges, especially those that recruit primarily working-class and lower middle-class students, the apprentices still dominate the scene. And even in so-called elite colleges, some students still view their education as an occupational passport, and resist involvement with both the youth culture and the academic enterprise. Furthermore, as I will suggest below, I think we are witnessing the emergence of yet a third conception of youth, which differs from both apprenticeship and youth culture. So the shift in images of youth is complex and far from complete.

Nor do I want to imply that young men and women are either *simply* apprentices or *simply* youth culturists. To do so would be to leave out what is probably the central fact about most college students—namely, their *ambivalence toward their own youth.* A great deal has been said and written about the ambivalence of older people toward adolescents—the mixture of envy, respect, fear, titillation, exaggeration and hope with which non-youths perennially eye the younger generation. But much less has been said about the ambivalence of the young toward themselves, their fluctuation between a view of themselves as free and reckless participants in the most irresponsible of youth cultures, and the alternate image of themselves as sober and dedicated apprentice

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citizens. Indeed, a controversy rages between those observers who see American youth as wild and irresponsible, and those who see only the deferential and conformist side of youth.

The point is, I think, that these observers are usually looking at two sides of the very same people, mistaking the part for the whole. Such oversimplification is especially hard to avoid because young people themselves present now one and now another face, all the while maintaining that there is no more than meets the eye. Not that they deliberately deceive older people as to what they are like—on the contrary, when a young man or woman is with representatives of the adult world (teachers, ministers, admissions officers, polltakers) he not only acts like a future citizen of America, he really *feels* that way. And the same youths under other circumstances—when with friends, at Fort Lauderdale or Newport, in campus coffee houses, fraternities and sororities or dormitories—really *feel* like hoods, beatniks, College Joes or Dekes. But in each of these stances some of the same ambivalence exists, despite the frequent insistence of the young (with a characteristic adolescent combination of ambivalence and intolerance for ambivalence) that there is only one side to the coin.

However complex, shifting and ambivalent these definitions of youth, they have in common a fundamental indifference to politics. Indeed, they do more than suggest indifference to politics; they make it virtually abnormal for a young man of standard middle-class background to become passionately involved with national or international issues. Not surprisingly, those few who have violated the implicit prohibition on politics in these images have often come from atypical milieus—usually either from recent European immigrant stock, or from upper-class backgrounds capable of resisting the dominant American mores. And also not surprising is the array of reinforcing and supporting customs that have buttressed the apolitical outlook of American students. Among these buttressing customs two seem to me especially important today: what is usually referred to as campus politics, and what is often called the legacy of McCarthyism. Both of these are commonly misunderstood.

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"Campus politics," as most Americans use the term, refers primarily to the intramural politics of American undergraduate life—the quarrels over elections to student legislatures and student judiciary councils, over the role of the dean of women and over that traditionally most vexing of college problems, the hours at women's dormitories. Thus, "campus politician" is a slightly pejorative term for a would-be manipulator of campus factions—and it seldom refers to a young person interested in broader political issues. Indeed, the substantive issues of campus politics seldom resemble the topics of what I will henceforth call "true politics"—that is, active concern with state, national and international issues. But because of similarities in outward form (both have elections, issues, parties, candidates, campaigns and parliaments), campus politics is usually seen as a "training for democracy," as a preparation for political responsibility in later life. In fact, however, I think that campus politics acts as a subtle deterrent to true political activity.

Campus politics usually short-circuits energy from political activity on the broader scene—much as, among adults, passionate arguments about new roads, school bond issues and fluoridation distract attention from more pressing and affecting national and international affairs. Once the energies of young men and women are channeled into such matters as the relationship between fraternity members and nonmembers, or two a.m. sign-outs from women's dormitories, they are seldom likely to be rechanneled into broader matters. The topics about which students are concerned are often quite important, but the point is that such intramural politics are often a substitute for, rather than a complement to, truly political interests. This short-circuiting is often abetted by frightened college administrators who distinguish between "on-campus" issues which are deemed within the competence of the young, and "off-campus" issues about which they cannot express themselves publicly. Such a distinction of course merely reinforces the definitions of youth that make it a time for preparation or panty raids, but not for real political interests.

But so-called student politics is a deterrent to true politics for another more important reason: it implicitly suggests that indi-

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viduals are not capable of making important decisions about the general welfare. To make this point clearer, assume that under the guise of "training for democracy" we were seeking to convince a generation of young Americans that they lacked the wisdom to make policy decisions, and that omnicompetent officials alone possessed this wisdom. It would be hard to find a better system than student politics. We would begin in grade school by gradually giving to students all the minor decisions with which the grownups did not want to be bothered—dances, class elections, crossing streets, bond drives and so on. At the same time, however, we would reserve all of the major decisions for the grownups, met in secret council of the Tuesday Teachers' Meeting or in private session of the Board of Regents. To make sure that a complete feeling of incompetence ensued, we would make all student decisions, no matter how trivial, subject to review by some higher adult body. By these techniques, I think we could create in all but the most independent and strong-willed a subtle feeling—perhaps the more effective because never openly stated—that they were incapable of making any but the most trivial decisions, and even these, only if subject to review by higher authority. A generation so trained would feel powerless and helpless with major issues, and would be inclined to leave truly political matters—things that really mattered—in the hands of higher-ups, whether they be Principals, Deans, Pentagons or National Security Councils. In short, campus politics is too often instead of, rather than in addition to, true politics: it subtly convinces students that they are incapable of dealing with the major issues of national welfare and survival that ultimately affect them far more deeply than most campus issues.

Another factor that conspires with our apolitical images of youth—indeed is reinforced by them—is the fear remaining from the McCarthy period. When such fear is mentioned, we usually think of a youth who refuses to take part in some political activity in which he believes lest it "go on his record" and subsequently be "used against him." In fact, however, I think that the fear of later reprisal is small compared to that special American fear of one's own idealism and innocence, against which the "dis-

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closures" of the McCarthy period reverberated. Americans, and especially American men, have always been afraid of being a "sucker," of being "taken in," of being "had" or of being "duped"—of becoming the unwilling and unknowing instrument of another's will. One of the revealing peculiarities of American speech illustrates this fear in a more general context—it is good for a man to make something, but never to be made—whether it be to be made *to do* something, to be made *into* something or, worst of all, simply to *be made.*

Thus, the "disclosures" of the red-baiters, and their world of "unwitting dupes," "front organizations," "inconscient tools," "pseudo-reds," "hapless victims," et cetera, activated a not-too-latent fear in many young Americans that their idealism, tender-mindedness, sensitivity or innocence might mislead them into the position of the "sucker." When students give reasons for refusing to sign political petitions with which they fully agree, they usually cite their doubts as to the backers and sponsors of the petition, worrying about the uses to which their names might be put. It is a mistake to assume that these students are really considering future security clearance; rather, in an age of conspiratorial interpretations of history, all but the most resolute or insensitive tremble lest they too become the pawns of conspiracy. Given such nagging doubts, and the impossibility of ever being *sure* about the credentials of any petition, individual or group, inaction is often the safest and easiest course. But by taking this course, young men and women merely confirm that image of youth that deems youthful political activity somehow "un-American."

Given these apolitical images of youth, and the distractions and fears that have supported them, it is not surprising that until recently few lights have broken the political darkness on most American campuses. To be sure, in the thirties there were flickers of left-wing political groups in metropolitan and "elite" colleges, but their total membership was small; and although the students involved were talented and vocal far beyond their numbers, they found few answering voices among the majority of their fellow-students. Further, the ardor of even these students was first channeled into the war and then cooled by the cold war, so that

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by 1950 left-wing groups had disappeared from most American campuses. The McCarthy period brought no student political protest, although students as a group were far more opposed to indiscriminate red-hunting than the general population. Nor did student organizations like the Young Republicans and Young Democrats constitute real exceptions. Small as these groups were, their claimed membership was swollen by inactive members who joined in search of an extracurricular activity for the nonathletic; and their active membership included a disproportionate number of ex-debaters and future lawyers, including not a few seeking prepolitical apprenticeships and free visitors' passes to the next National Convention.

In the past two years, however, there have been signs of increasing political activity on a number of campuses. And although I should re-emphasize that by foreign standards the students involved are very few in number, they are of interest both for the unprecedented attention they receive and for their possible role as forecasts of things to come. The two most visible new groups are the right-wing organizations usually associated with Young Americans for Freedom (Y.A.F.), and the single-issue groups, usually left-wing, organized around such issues as desegregation, disarmament and loyalty oaths. It is generally agreed that right-wing groups elicit less support from most student bodies than the single-issue groups, and that they are not always spontaneous student creations. But on the basis of very unsystematic acquaintance with such right-wing groups and their literature and with one or two current studies of their membership, I think that they are bringing into political activity a kind of youth who has previously been politically inactive—a type we can call the displaced apprentice.

Such students continue to view college, and youth, in terms of an older apprentice image. At liberal arts colleges, however, they increasingly find no timetable to memorize, no maps of the terrain ahead, but instead a heavy pressure to make a commitment to the youth culture or even the academic enterprise itself. They frequently come from small conservative towns; and their parents' teachings and sacrifices have given them an outlook and a char-

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acter that would have fit them well for upward mobility in the older, more entrepreneurial society. These students at many liberal arts colleges now find themselves in a minority, viewed with puzzlement by their contemporaries and teachers; furthermore, they usually see that academic rewards and prestige go to the more sensitive, searching and interpersonally minded. The broader political scene also affects them: during the Eisenhower Administration, there still seemed a place for the inner-directed in the counsels of state and power; but the Kennedy Administration, with its surrounding phalanxes of college professors, suggests that the days of the old-fashioned entrepreneur are numbered. From several points of view, the displaced apprentice faces the unpleasant alternative of accepting his college's and by extension his society's judgment of him as out-of-date—or else of finding a way to repudiate the values and the people that deem him outmoded.

A group like Y.A.F. seems to provide an answer to some such students. For one, it offers a meeting place with other like-minded young men and women, and a sense of belonging to a group with powerful backers and a conspiratorial air. But more important, the ideology of a group like Y.A.F., which ascetically calls for a return to a purer, harder and tougher America, gives the displaced apprentice a voice for repudiating the soft-minded liberals, college professors, bureaucrats and others who epitomize the newer America in which he is characterologically obsolescent. And, not least of all, belonging to such a group permits a student of conservative background to retain and reinforce his loyalty to his parents and home town, and perhaps even to contemplate going home again to run for office on a conservative ticket.

But if the so-called resurgent right can be partly understood in terms of traditional American definitions of youth, the single-issue groups that are more prominent on most college campuses do not fit these definitions. To understand these groups we must posit the emergence of a third American definition of youth, one that is only now beginning to take shape, and one whose future remains uncertain. This new conception of youth, which I will call "academic," has as its distinctive feature a commitment

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to intellect, to knowledge, to scholarship and the academic enterprise, relatively unheard-of in earlier American college generations. At the same time, it involves considerable generational self-consciousness—awareness of oneself as a member of a distinctive age group rather like the youth culture—and also a basic acceptance of the traditional values of our society: those values that, although not always practiced by parents and elders, are at least preached.

The emergence of the academic image of youth is in part a consequence of the changing complexion of student bodies. As admission standards rise, the caliber of college applicants rises with them, so that more and more students arrive at college well prepared, already committed to the values and vices of the academic community, more genuinely interested in getting an education (if necessary for its own sake), less patient with both vocationalism and fraternities. Most teachers will testify that these students are still in a minority; but they are a growing minority that at some colleges will soon become the majority. Their level of sophistication and awareness is extremely high, probably higher than that of any previous college group; and while they are not immune to the pressures against political commitment in this country, they are at the same time more realistically aware of the importance of national and international issues for their own and their generation's future.

To be sure, the outlooks of such students are not necessarily political. Often their interests are rather narrowly academic; and for some, ascent of the ladders of academic specialization and promotion will merely replace older forms of status-seeking, leaving little time for politics. And when they are politically committed, such academic students are seldom radical or revolutionary; rather, they are interested in basic and unexceptionable American values like peace, equality and freedom. Their differences with their parents are seldom over matters of basic value, but rather over the implementation of these values, as with the Negro students active in the sit-in movement who have shocked older Negro leaders—including their own parents—by trying to achieve in practice the rights that their elders had always

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affirmed but never dared to demand. And, finally, the distinctive political style of such students is restrained, reflective, cautious, intellectual and even pedantic.

Only some, and perhaps only a few, of the students active in the single-issue groups fit this picture; but there are enough, I think, to color the style of these groups. One sees the restraint of these students in their picketing and petitions rather than protests and parades, in their carefully planned study-and-discussion groups, in their debates at which they give their opponents the platform, and above all in the nonviolence and self-control of the Negro sit-in movement. Such students resist efforts to organize them in the service of some general ideological program, so that attempts of radical groups to capture the student peace movement or the Negro sit-in movement have been remarkably unsuccessful. And the academic style of such students was manifest during the recent Peace March on Washington in their original (if not invariably successful) effort to present carefully studied and reasoned arguments to Congressmen and government officials.

The recent political activity of "academic" students is due to a variety of factors. For one, the number of such students is increasing, so that the reservoir of students intelligently aware of "true politics" has increased. And, for another, the relative success and restraint of the Negro sit-in movement has inspired white students in the North to supporting action which, once begun, was easily redirected into other activities like disarmament and anti-House Un-American Activities Committee groups. But most important has been the change of administration in Washington. Unlike its predecessor, the Kennedy Administration has been solicitous of the good opinion of future voters and responsive to student demonstrations—at least to the extent of "symbolic" pots of coffee, if not to changes in policy. And most crucial to students of academic outlook has been the presence of a number of academic, academically respected men on the President's staff. If the entrepreneurial apprentice found justification for inactivity in the golf-links-and-shooting-brake ethos of the Eisenhower regime, the academic student finds a spur to activity in the Harvard-Senior-Common-Room mentality of Kennedy's immediate entourage. Not

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even the touch football of the Kennedy Clan, which reminds him uncomfortably of his own lack of athletic prowess, subdues his hopes that his kind may yet have a say in Washington.

But for all of the interest and publicity aroused (and sought) by the new political activists on American campuses, the fact remains that few students are involved, and that most of them are concentrated at a few of the most selective institutions like California, Harvard, Michigan, Antioch, et cetera. The vast majority —at "elite" colleges more than ninety percent and at most colleges probably more than ninety-nine percent—remain uninvolved with true politics beyond perhaps a perfunctory membership in the local branch of the Young Republicans. So in considering the future of student politics, the critical question is whether these "inert masses" are destined to become more active than they have been traditionally.

The future is, of course, something that is determined by men and groups of men. And it follows that the shape of the future is not merely something to be guessed at, but, if we have hopes, something to be molded in accordance with these hopes. There are many, of course, who hope that American youth will remain unconcerned with politics. Political apathy, it is said, prevents the radical youth movements that plague other governments; and in more sophisticated sociological terms, essentially the same argument is phrased in terms of social stability and social solidarity. It is probably apparent by now that my own hopes differ. For one, I see little likelihood of American students ever playing a radical role, much less a revolutionary one, in our society. And, even if they did, it would be far from a calamity, given the almost total absence of radical or fundamental criticism of American society at present. On the contrary, I am more impressed with the dangers of political inactivity, ignorance and helplessness, especially in an era when the future of civilization or of life itself depends on a few words spoken into a red telephone in the Rockies or the Urals. In such a time, the greatest danger is not student ferment but resignation from concern with the shape of the wider world—the delegation of responsibility for survival to experts, weapons specialists,

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generals and even to Presidents and their academic advisers.

More important, then, than guessing at the future of student politics, is the effort to suggest ways of increasing political involvement and activity on college campuses. And here the academic community seems to be bound to play a major role. I noted earlier that the form and style of the "academic" definition of youth was still indeterminate. Just as the real-life counterparts of Horatio Alger's bankers helped form the concept of apprenticeship, and just as the peer group and mass media helped define the youth culture, so the members of the academic community will have an especially large part in forming the outlooks of the emerging "academic" student, determining among other things the extent to which these students consider political concern and activity appropriate and necessary to their lives.

Here teachers can do a number of things. For one, I think we must increasingly question our traditional American opposition to "ideology." To be sure, everyone is against narrow and blind dogmatism; but if by "ideology" we merely mean a coherent political program that embraces many sectors of society, then common sense dictates an "ideological" approach to politics. All of the recent evidence from the social sciences suggests how difficult it is to deal with single issues in isolation. To deal with only one issue at a time is rather as if the physician agreed to treat only the external symptoms of a disease, or the psychiatrist pledged himself to discuss only the current manifestations of a neurosis. Social and political issues are complex, complexly interrelated; and sometimes the best way to alleviate one problem is to ignore it and start with another. A commitment to a single-issue approach or inflexible opposition to "ideology" is too often a commitment to ineffectuality or opposition to fundamental cure.

Secondly, and at a very different level, far more can be done to encourage students to understand their own position in the world and their role in society. Here I obviously do not mean that students should be lectured about social responsibility and the perversity of privatism. Such preaching would have the opposite effect, if only because privatism is already a kind of *faute de mieux* response, a compensation on the part of young men and women who

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would quickly seize a beautiful or noble or challenging purpose if they could but find one. Nor do I mean that students should be required to take more courses in political science and international relations. Instead, or in addition, I think that intelligent young people should be encouraged and helped to explore their own positions and places in society, to understand better the conflicts and stresses that beset them, not only as individuals, but as members of a generation, a nation and the twentieth century. Here most colleges do far too little, for those courses that deal with our society and our motivations often deliberately seek to prevent personal involvement, soul-searching and application of knowledge to one's own life—in short, they seek to prevent that participation that alone can give insight. But one can imagine—in fact many of us have seen it happen—that a real awareness of the psychosocial forces that confront their generation can give students a vastly heightened sense of their political responsibilities and powers.

And, finally, teachers must be aware of their growing role not only as imparters of information and techniques to their students, but as personal exemplars. This is a role that most teachers consciously dislike, but students cast their teachers as heroes or villains in the best of times. Even the most anti-intellectual undergraduate finds among his instructors models of ivory-tower withdrawal and narrow pedantry that he determines *not* to emulate. But when society by and large lacks adequate paternal exemplars, students become more inclined to seek them among their teachers. And in the coming years as more and more students arrive in college already committed to academic interests and values, they will be even more likely to search for epitomes of the good (academic) life among their instructors. Less insulated against emulation by a contempt for the "merely academic" and by a loyalty to the youth culture, they will be more inclined to find their teachers worthy unless proved otherwise, and probably more likely to emulate them even when they are not worthy.

All of this means that an increased responsibility (and to most teachers an unwanted one) falls on the academic community in shaping the self-definitions and ideals of youth. The academic community has two mutually exclusive possibilities, which lead

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to very different outcomes in terms of student politics. One is pedantry—a narrow concentration on subspecialties within fenced-off fields, hostility to general interests, to speculation and to broad commitments. The other I would call intelligence at its best, and it is marked by social and political concern and by openness to the nonacademic world, which is after all the ultimate *raison d'être* of the college and university. Which possibility prevails seems to me very important; for what is ultimately at issue is our own personal survival and the survival of civilization in the world. Not that these issues will be decided by or at American colleges—far from it; but if we are granted so much time, they will be decided in part by young men and women who have attended these colleges. And just as past generations of Americans have patterned themselves on earlier images of youth, so the coming generation will be formed by the conceptions of youth, and life, available to them.

At worst, a narrow academicism of the young could result, made more intolerant and vicious by the fusion of personal ambition and a pseudopatriotism that thinks we can "harness brainpower" to beat the Russians. At best, an academic generation might become a truly intelligent generation, animated by public concern and guided by political understanding. In helping to shape such a concept, the most that teachers can do (and it is a great deal) is to suggest possibilities, to hold open doors, to criticize the false and spurious and support the true—and above all to try to embody in their own lives that humane political concern and openness of social vision that is the mark of true intelligence.

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Winter: For an Untenable Situation

ALAN DUGAN

Outside it is cold. Inside,
although the fire has gone out
and all the furniture is burnt,
it is much warmer. Oh let
the white refrigerator car
of day go by in glacial thunder:
when it gets dark, and when
the branches of the tree outside
look wet because it is so dark,
oh we will burn the house itself
for warmth, the wet tree too,
you will burn me, I will burn you,
and when the last brick of the fireplace
has been cracked for its nut of warmth
and the last bone cracked for its coal
and the andirons themselves sucked cold,
we will move on! remembering
the burning house, the burning tree,
the burning you, the burning me,
the ashes, the brick-dust, the bitter iron,
and the time when we were warm,
and say, "Those were the good old days."

✪ ALAN DUGAN's "On a February Thaw" appeared in the Summer, 1962, SCHOLAR. Mr. Dugan received the National Book Award and the 1962 Pulitzer Prize for his first volume, *Poems,* published in the Yale Series of Younger Poets.

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Footnote to a Current Dialogue

GERALD W. JOHNSON

FOR A MAN WHO IS MATHEMATICALLY ILLITERATE to barge into the Snow-Leavis controversy intending to take either side would be what, when I was a boy in North Carolina, we called "assumacy." There are, however, certain aspects of the affair on which the observation of the unschooled is as valid as that of a savant, since they have no bearing on the merits of the issue. One of these is the tardiness of the debate.

It is an interesting demonstration of the intellectual lag in reverse. Professor Snow is dismayed by discovering how far the general public limps along behind not only the leaders but the main body of scientific thought. I am, if not exactly dismayed, certainly astonished to learn that Professor Snow is only now—that is to say, in 1959, when he delivered his famous, not to say notorious lecture—apprehending what has been plain to laics for years now running into decades. To be precise, I should qualify that, I suppose, by suggesting that the savant may have been long acquainted with the fact, but is just discovering the implications of the fact.

For it is certainly more than ten and must be approaching twenty years since I observed to a scientist friend, the late Raymond Pearl, a biologist, that I expected to live to see him burned as a witch.

Pearl, I freely admit, had the better of the ensuing argument. He adduced a dozen reasons, all fallacious, for saying that I was talking nonsense, but in the end came up with one that was conclusive.

"In addition to all that," said Pearl triumphantly, "witches are women."

✪ GERALD W. JOHNSON, whose numerous writing activities include the *New Republic* column, "The Superficial Aspect," is author most recently of *The Man Who Feels Left Behind* and *The Presidency*.

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He had me there, for there was no shadow of doubt of his complete masculinity. My error was in not saying "warlock" instead of "witch." The prophecy also was defeated, since death by natural causes carried him off before the Secular Arm got around to him. Still, I maintain that my estimate of the general situation was not in error, and I am strengthened in that belief by finding C. P. Snow repeating the identical arguments that I used against Pearl.

In point of fact the argument was precipitated because Pearl was doing on a minuscule scale what Snow recommends on the large. The American, beginning as a young man with a study of fruit flies, had developed into a student of population trends, which compelled him to become a statistician as well as a biologist, and statistics made him a keenly interested observer of the field of mathematics. He was also a gregarious person whose habit was to lunch every Monday with half a dozen kindred spirits and he delighted in astonishing them with reports of the latest developments in half a dozen sciences. Which is to say, he was establishing the line of communication with the nonscientific community that Snow urges as an objective of modern education.

The nature of the item that led to our exchange I no longer recall. It may have been something in genetics, but it is just as probable that it was in astrophysics, or group theory, or in some other discipline; but whatever it was contravened so absolutely the concepts harbored by the man in the street as to make it seem preposterous. Nevertheless, I knew that Pearl knew the scientific world; and I knew that he would not quote any obvious, or even suspected charlatan, except, with sardonic joy, to expose the fellow as a quack. Thus I was compelled to believe that whatever he reported seriously was the finding of respectable authority.

But as a follower of perhaps the most unscientific calling known to man, journalism, I knew the world of the laic as Pearl did not; and I knew that when authority too often and too greatly astonishes the laics, the result frequently is not the enlightenment of the lay world, but the stripping of respectability from authority; and a pundit deprived of the shield of respecta-

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bility is exposed to the slings and arrows of a fortune that is outrageous indeed.

True it is that the *auto-da-fé* has fallen into disuse, but, as the original Henry Ford grandly replied when asked how he was going to enforce prohibition in the plant he was building in Ireland, "We have our methods." Ostracism in more than the Masons' thirty-three degrees is still applicable to the disreputable, and if you doubt that it still has barbs, ask Oppenheimer, Lattimore, Urey and countless others accused of the extralegal crime of cherishing subversive tendencies, our equivalent of the medieval offense of holding commerce with the Evil One.

Professor Snow, taking note of this condition, finds the world, or at least our part of it, separated into two cultures between which communication is woefully inadequate. By way of amendment he would indoctrinate the realm of the laics with more of the instrumental disciplines of the scientists, specifically mathematics, but including other implements that scientists use to accomplish their astonishments. Having become familiar with the tools, he thinks, we scientific illiterates would rid ourselves of the hallucination that sorcery is somehow involved.

This propelled the humanist, Professor Leavis, into strident opposition. He perceives no merit in the proposal. To him it has the look of a none-too-subtle plot to denigrate the humanities and probably to obliterate the classics, which Leavis would regard as a disaster of the first magnitude. He is so strident, indeed, that some observers profess to detect in the learned doctor himself a trace of the groundling's suspicion that Ahriman, the malevolent spirit, has somehow intervened to poison the thought processes of the scientists.

As touching the merits of the controversy itself, the relatively unschooled cannot claim the right to form an opinion. It is within our province, however, to observe that both contestants ignore almost entirely a factor that is of near consequence and great delicacy to mild-mannered persons whose ultimate desire is to die peacefully in bed with, if they choose, a Doctor of Medicine in attendance on one side and a Doctor of Divinity on the other. This factor is the comparative impotence of intellectuality, scien-

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tific or philosophic, to control the course of human events in matters of the largest importance.

The fabrication of the hydrogen bomb was an intellectual feat of so high an order that it is beyond the comprehension of an untrained mind; but as affecting the course of history, which is to say, the lives and destinies of the generality of mankind, it is of not the slightest importance. It is not the fabrication, it is the explosion of the bomb over a populated area that will accomplish visible and permanent results in a big way; and that explosion will signalize the triumph of nescience, not science, the victory of sophistry over philosophy.

Improvement of communication between the two cultures is desirable but, if I understand the contending professors, there is no dispute on that point. The contention is over whether the improved communication should proceed from the scientific culture into the philosophic, or from the philosophic into the scientific. To the untutored, however, this seems a minor consideration by comparison with the importance of assuring the survival of any culture.

I confess to an error of material importance in my prognostication of long ago. It was not the stake of which Pearl stood in danger, and the danger was no more his than mine. Alike we stand in danger of being vaporized by nuclear heat, and whether in some cathedral square, or in a library, or in a laboratory is an irrelevant detail. The permanent elimination of Pearl, and of you and me along with him, is the prime consideration. That danger has increased, not diminished, in the years that have passed since our luncheon, and the prospect that it will be eliminated or materially reduced by strictly intellectual activity is not promising.

Snow quotes Bertrand Russell as setting the time limit of the impending holocaust at a maximum of ten years. To set a time limit is reckless; it verges away from plausible prediction toward soothsaying. But in any event the catastrophe, whenever it comes, will not be precipitated by the culture that fabricated the bomb, but by its antithesis. No human being has yet adduced a single coldly intellectual reason why the United States and

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Russia should destroy each other. The forces that impel us toward the calamity are emotional, not rational, which certainly suggests that the field of our closest and unremitting interest should be that of the emotions, rather than that of cogitation. The grossly neglected discipline is not logic, it is ethics. The fact that it is not even clearly defined is eloquent of its neglect.

To make such an assertion may give the appearance of coming down heavily on the side of the humanists, thereby participating in the controversy, but it is not necessarily so; for the fact that scientific approaches to ethical theory have thus far failed is not conclusive evidence that they will always fail. The Aristotelians in both camps have a distinguished precedent for making the effort.

The essential fact, however, is that the intellectuals are not in control and supply small evidence of obtaining control of their own destinies, to say nothing of dominance of the world. The scanty available evidence, indeed, points in the other direction. The flight from intelligence has become so widespread in recent years that "intellectual" has become, to a really appalling extent, a term of reproach. The mad scientist, that irrational enemy of the human race, once recognized as merely a stock figure of blood-and-thunder fiction, is dangerously close to becoming the norm in popular estimation. The prototype of scientists is no longer Edison, but Fuchs.

If this were confined to the completely illiterate it would be far less dangerous, but it permeates fairly high intellectual levels. A university president and a business tycoon deprived the country of Oppenheimer's services, and "Admiral" Strauss approved. These men are not shoeless denizens of shantytowns, but highly respected leaders in their own lines.

Such men are harried by an ambivalent attitude toward advanced scientists. They realize that the modern world must have their services, but it is evident that they realize it with regret; for emotionally, not rationally, they perceive a natural depravity in high intellectual achievement, especially achievement in the physical sciences, which of late have been advancing at a speed that imposes an unbearable strain upon the credulity of non-

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scientists. Credulity, overstrained, inevitably generates mythology.

When the phenomenon of thunder was susceptible of no rational explanation, Jupiter Tonens was invented. Since there is no obvious connection between a highly trained intelligence and treachery, we have invented elaborate psychological explanations of it; but the sum and substance of it is a widespread superstition that a man who has reached the vanguard of scientific thought is likely to betray the country, not for profit—indeed sometimes at an actual loss—but out of sheer malevolence. His motto is, "Evil, be thou my good," and while we no longer follow Milton in frankly attributing the sentiment to Satan, our response to it is precisely the Puritan response to a suspicion of traffic with the Devil. If it is inconvenient to stone the trafficker, he should at least be regarded with deep suspicion, and his liberty should be severely restricted in the interest of national security.

That is the current situation, and since it was brought about not by reason but by emotion, the prospect that it can be materially altered by reason alone seems rather dim to a nonscientist. Hence his interest in the outcome of the Snow-Leavis controversy tends to be languid. May the best man win—but whether the winner will be any good for practical purposes is debatable. More and better education, by all means—but an educated fanatic is tenfold more dangerous than an ignoramus.

A bystander is driven to the inference that perhaps the trouble with our intellectual leaders, at least the Americans, is hypercivilization. They are aware that Alexander Hamiliton erred when, in his haste, he declared, "Your people, sir, is a great beast." In that, they are civilized. But they seem unaware that he erred in gross, not in detail. In that, they are too civilized. Demos in certain circumstances—when uninformed, misinformed or emotionally manipulated—is in sober fact a great beast; but in all circumstances, whether beastly or rational being, Demos is enormously powerful, quite powerful enough to exterminate his own species.

To an untutored laic this appears to be the central problem in our current predicament. More than that, it seems so urgent and so frightening that to its solution should be applied every

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resource that we can command. A complete solution, of course, is in the realm of fantasy; but that a partial solution is attainable is proved by the history of the United States. There has never been a day since 1776 when our democratic system was not in danger of collapse from the inherent capacity of Demos, under sufficient provocation, to turn beastly; but in each succeeding crisis thus far the catastrophe has been averted, sometimes by a shudderingly close margin, but successfully. The inescapable inference is that we have found partial solutions of the problem of restraining the beast and restoring the creature to rationality.

One partial solution, of course, is the extension and improvement of communication between our leaders of thought and those who follow, like Saint Peter, "afar off." The too-much-disdained "popularizers" have done yeoman service in this regard and deserve a higher status than they have ever been accorded by the intellectuals. But the most perfect communication imaginable would not be sufficient, for one side of the equation consists of human beings, not of disembodied intellects. Therefore when the intellectual problem has been solved the emotional will remain; and it is emotional ground that is the seedbed of *autos-da-fé*, lynching parties, un-American activities committees and wars.

Not until philosophers become kings, or kings philosophers, thought Plato, will the *polis* have rest from its evils. Nor even then, for kingship is now outmoded. There has not been a President of the United States, or assuredly not one in this century, who didn't know better than to do some of the things that he did. But the President, like a constitutional monarch, reigns but does not govern; and some, as the punster remarked, don't even shower. Demos governs; and he governs in part by logic, but largely by whatever ethos is prevalent at the moment. Hence the construction of an ethical system that the modern generation will find credible is certainly as urgent as, and some of us lowbrows would say far more urgent than, any rearrangement of our intellectual furniture.

If we can't do that, it is a bit of a poser to assign any sound reason why we continue to burden the earth, much less assume to dominate it.

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Theme Song

LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL

Would timelessness be half so sweet alone
As when it flowed discernible in time
Or could the cadence of the Godhead beat
Unless embodied swaying in the tide?

Now in the silence time and timelessness
Are blent and wedded in this quiet tone,
This humming, that the world makes at its work;
And hearing it becomes our best content.

How shall the lonely ear find rest hereafter
Without the comfort of that tide incoming,
The sound of turning and the sound of time,
The quiet hum the world makes at its work?

✪ LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL, a free-lance editor and literary adviser, has recently completed a new book to add to the seven published collections of her poetry.

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Poem Before Departure

JEAN BURDEN

This place moves from me
like a slow tide pulling out
against the moon.
It does not matter if I push up earth
against the door,
or turn the key within the lock;
even as I lean,
the tree trembles in the wood,
the pebble flies within the rock.

Or if I stay like a crouched animal
within,
I watch the walls move back,
grow membrane-thin;
leaves sprayed against the pane
blur a little at the edge;
vines pale and loosen on the sill.

It does not matter that I prop beneath the knob
tables, chairs.
Something recedes
that once was still;
what was mobile, stares.

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The time is soon,
though I, longing to be caught by root
or weed,
resist departure as a kind of death.
Something began and ended here.
One morning, whether I dare or do not dare,
I shall look up, unroofed, to sky;
I shall gaze through timber
that once I leaned my fear against—
and knock on air.

✪ JEAN BURDEN, poetry editor of *Yankee,* has had poems in *Poetry,* the *Virginia Quarterly Review, Saturday Review, Epoch* and many other magazines, and her work has been anthologized in eight Borestone Mountain Poetry Award volumes of *Best Poems.* Her first book of poetry will be published soon by Clarke & Way.

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The Sense of Coexistence

DAVID FELIX

UNLESS SOMETHING WORSE HAPPENS we shall be coexisting with the Communist reality for time beyond view. Yet we have no conceptual basis for this coexistence. We regard it as a nasty and unassimilable variant on human progress.

The point of discomfort is moral. We believe that the society of the West is fundamentally good, whatever injustices do appear, and that the Communist system is fundamentally evil, whatever good intentions organized it and whatever chance benefits have resulted. The evidence of Communist evil is indeed enormous: the lies, state murder, forced labor, absence of individual liberty, enslaved nations.

Vibrating with the horror of it, we neglect the acutely apposite fact: the Communist position is equally moral and moralizing. Basing its argument on Marxist writ, it specifically defines our society as evil. As Marx taught in his theory of value, all value is created by labor and any revenues—profit and rent—withheld from those who created them are the fruits of robbery. Exploitation, thus, is central in our system, which maintains itself by a repression that is ferocious even when it is so subtle that only the well-schooled Marxist can detect it.

The two moralities are closed systems, unable to communicate with each other. Any pragmatic accommodation—coexistence—is an evil by definition. Of course, both sides excuse it by calling it the lesser evil compared to nuclear war, but the more honest moralizers preach the hope of destroying the enemy system.

I suggest that both views are equally wrong, that there is a moral basis for coexistence. I suggest, further, that our inability

✪ DAVID FELIX, a former news service correspondent in Paris and government information officer in Vienna, is the author of other articles on the theory and practice of foreign affairs. Presently a writer and public relations executive in New York, he has recently completed a book on the Sacco-Vanzetti case.

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to see it prevents us from properly appreciating the enormous values of coexistence today and from achieving a maximum of good and security in the world. I insist that coexistence works admirably. Nor is the adverb to be qualified out of its baldness through apologies to frightened Berliners, thrashed Hungarians—or the abysmally silent millions murdered by the Communists. It is not qualified despite the few seconds intervening between other millions of lives and nuclear annihilation. If these are horrid postulates, they will be joined by other conceptual cruelties in the development of the argument.

The spokesman of a narrow Western morality can, at least, agree that coexistence has been the formula for the prevention of a world war until now. He can take a limited comfort from the fact of our continued existence and the surviving hope of our eventual triumph. But, by that logic, coexistence justifies itself only in terms of the destruction of Communism. Our morality permits a postponement of the final battle against evil but not a denial of it.

Yet the moralist's pragmatism is wiser than his eschatology. Indeed, many of the actions of our responsible moralists—the President, Secretary of State and other formulators of foreign policy—give off luminous traces of ideas incompatible with their solemnly published views. Americans are competent pragmatists, and a contemporary William James could construct a moral philosophy of coexistence from our actions. I propose, however, to build the sense of coexistence with all available materials.

Consider the situation of a large backward country—an abstraction for the moment—in the twentieth century. Compared with the per capita annual income of about three thousand dollars in the United States, the country survives at, let us say, sixty dollars per person. The figure is not extraordinary; India has recently congratulated itself at increasing the individual income by ten dollars in five years—to reach sixty-six dollars, and China and much of the Orient and Africa exist at that level. Such comparative per capita figures give only a rough approximation of a fractional meaning—how can you compare the values, emotional and pecuniary, of a sacred cow and a country club membership?—but they

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compound within themselves the various elements that mean well-being or the lack of it.

At an earlier age a backward country continued indefinitely in a state of dreaming, as Hegel called it, even though it may have become a colony of a modern power. But twentieth-century progress, expressing itself in less overt political action, will not let the backward nation be. Today, technology invades the old dream; everyone wants penicillin, automobiles and Western dignity. The process was generated out of the colonial system itself but it moves today with a force augmented by the newer phenomena. The logic of colonial administration had led the Western powers to train technical assistants from among the subject peoples, but technique demanded thought, and the technicians, inevitably learning along with their skills Western ideas on liberty and the dignity of man, became the leaders of a revolution against the West. They would not, however, have achieved success without that intensity of communication with the West brought about by technology.

The forms of this revolution are varied, but we are concerned with the abstraction, *backward country,* and I propose to sketch that abstract form of revolution that is the most efficient.

Let us begin with a group of leaders infected with Western ideas. To them, it becomes obvious that progress, expressed in terms of national power and the good life for the individual, requires a well-organized, highly developed technology. Their nation needs the transportation, factories, telephone wires and medical instruments of the advanced countries, and one way of getting them is to emulate the Western development. But that development took centuries: the slow dissolution of feudalism, development of the common law, training in responsibility of the citizenry, the modification of religious beliefs. This rhythm of advance is too slow, even if some time were to be saved by avoiding Western errors. It is too slow because the present existence of twentieth-century progress, however slowly achieved through past ages, is an immediate fact of tremendous force, blaring at the masses through radio loudspeakers, winking at them with electric light bulbs. Their leaders justify their position only by anticipating the demands so awakened in their people.

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If the leaders cannot begin at the beginning, important elements of Western progress show them how to make a true beginning out of a more mature situation. The solution is to turn the backward country into a nation-factory under a board of directors; the state becomes the capitalist. With this organization and the total responsibility for the economy that it implies, the board of directors must draw up a total plan that sets every aspect of life within an intricate developmental schedule. One important aspect is the character of the people themselves; it becomes necessary to create a sophisticated human material out of an illiterate population. A violence of change must shake the people.

This enormous task, subsuming the development of the personnel, the infrastructure and the fantastic varieties of industrial operations, requires an immense national investment. Here in the Western world, such an investment occurs according to the laws of financial supply and demand, as individuals sacrifice present expenditures in return for the hope of future dividends. It is true, however, that Western governments can and do manipulate matters in order to increase the investment proportions, but the principle of voluntary investment remains the base of action. This is too indirect and approximate for the factory state, which builds its plan around a predetermined investment rate.

However orderly the paper plan may be, its lines presume to contain killing pressures. The *raison d'être* of the plan is the poverty of the people. In order to conquer the poverty, however, the plan requires a disproportionate investment, much greater than that fraction of a Western state's revenues given over to investment. In other words, the plan demands the aggravated impoverishment of the already wretchedly poor. How much can you take away from a family subsisting on sixty dollars a year?

At this point the board of directors must realize that it needs more than a sensible plan. You cannot tell a man who is hungry and cold that he must become hungrier and colder for an indeterminate time. You must make him believe in your plan; you must give him a religion of progress. As Marx has said, religion is the opium of the people.

For the Western world, progress came so slowly that the state

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could make do with fragments of a religion of progress (eighteenth-century rationalism, nineteenth-century scientism) coexisting with an established religion *qua* religion. It is true that the old religion did resist progress to an extent, but it could be wrenched toward a somewhat more progressive posture by occasional blows (the attacks of rationalism), by sheer exposure to modern ideas and by cooperative churchly hypocrisy (the Catholic Church's condemnation of interest made less harmful by the concept of service charges for loans). But this is too slow for the abstract board of directors, since twentieth-century demands cannot wait for decades or centuries. Furthermore, the new state requires more than a passive church, it needs a church militant dedicated specifically to the state's aims.

The new religion is Marxism. Of course, its first claim is that it is not a religion, that it is a body of secular truth, but all religions begin with arbitrary premises that capture the first converts by a burst of revelation. The belief that a religon is not a religion is another well-assimilated arbitrary premise. Marxism, moreover, has all the major attributes of a religion: a mysterious doctrine requiring theological skill to be understood and interpreted, a body of prophets, priests and exegetists to exhort, threaten and explain, a cloud of saints and a pride of devils and a day of judgment.

The fact that Marxism purports to explain the economic process is relevant to its character as religion and not at all important to its character as a reality. All societies demand a religion, but the new religions must speak with modern metaphors, must substitute scientific mysteries for a simpler magic. It is, for example, no accident that one of the more successful of the American neoreligions calls itself Christian Science, and if Christian Science fails to vanquish cancer to the satisfaction of unbelievers, Marxism need not be embarrassed at its failure to explain the economic process. It is enough that Marxism use the idiom of economics at a time when society has gained sufficient self-consciousness to be aware of the economic process as an objective reality that can be acted upon.

Every society, including our own, also lives with a number of arbitrary beliefs outside the frame of the official religion and claiming a more or less scientific verity. The self-evident truth of the

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Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal, for example, is as arbitrary as it is nonsensical. Deriving from Locke's *tabula rasa,* the statement is, at best, an experimental metaphor of an unimportant philosophical system. Men are not equal in any real sense, despite our insistence that they should be equal. Yet the concept of equality, however violated in the exercise, was exceedingly useful in organizing a society in the nonhierarchic terms required by the objective circumstances of the American continent. Thus does irrational belief support pragmatic action, and we Americans have no right to condemn Marxist irrationality, more particularly when some of it also derives, by more complicated paths than ours, from Locke's ideas.

I have sketched the simple mechanics of state capitalism, and yet I have insisted on the need for a religious overlay that uses economic idiom but that is nonsense in real terms. Is there no danger that the irrationality of the religion will damage the management of the real economy? Yes; the religion is bound to cause distortions, but the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. State capitalism is so simple and sensible that it triumphs over the accidental intrusions of the irrational.

These then are two necessities for progress in a backward country: the machine and God. They are not enough. The contribution to morale made by religion is not sufficiently strong to force acceptance of the intensity of sacrifice demanded by the plan. Besides persuasion, a reluctant people requires a maximum of force, a huge mechanism of repression administered by a secret police. The inevitable and inevitably recurring resistance must be crushed in a continuing campaign. Indeed, enemies must be created where they fail to exist, because fresh anti-Christs add new emotional fuel to the blaze of religious belief.

The relation between religion and repression, as it affects state capitalism, is only one of the ways in which the three elements of the system act upon each other in double and triple combinations. In the early stages particularly, repression in the form of forced labor can be useful to the state-capitalistic system by providing docile, cheap labor, for example, to perform the wretchedest tasks of the economy, canal dredging, coal mining, timber cut-

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ting in distant, unattractive parts of the country. Later, as the economy becomes more sophisticated, such brute labor becomes uneconomic, to be replaced by skilled labor plus machines. But of course repression continues in less gross forms, assisting the state indirectly through religion, as in the manufacture of self-righteousness, or directly by providing a disciplined labor force and citizenry.

With these three elements—state capitalism, religion and repression—the backward nation can destroy time, breaking the vicious circle of poverty-ignorance-incompetence-backwardness-more poverty.

The sacrifices are enormous, but if rash progress implies the destruction of much human material (forced labor persists in dying rapidly), it is possible to find a counterbalance in what might be called macrodemographic terms. The poverty of the status quo compounds within itself disease and early death; India has an average life span of about half of the American sixty-nine years. A Communist state, by the simple decree of elementary sanitary measures, for example, can buy back many lives to compensate for those it destroyed. (Western observers laughed at Red China's obsession with germs that put numbers of the population into face masks, but such a campaign, no more ridiculous than American toothpaste promotion, has doubtless reduced disease.) The organization of full-scale medical care, dictated by *raison d'état,* will increase the life span at an almost calculable rate; the Soviet Union claims a longevity comparable to ours. On the face of that, Soviet moralizers could accuse such slower-moving leaders of backward nations as India's Nehru of murder by negligence.

The Draconian has strong justification. We cannot speak of a loss of liberty, since one corollary of backwardness is the absence of liberty and democratic procedures. With very little to lose except cheap human lives, the backward country permits its leaders a wide margin for error. Morality in such a country grows out of a soil incredibly alien to us, and we must hesitate long before we presume to hand down a judgment of guilty.

In my abstraction I have been tracing the main lines of the history of the sufficiently real Soviet Union. It is true that Russia

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was not a colony, as India was, nor was it bullied and robbed of territory, as China was, but it did experience a curious type of colonialism in reverse. Thus, Peter the Great invited foreigners into the country and gave them special privileges (in Marxist idiom, permitted them to exploit the natives) to exercise their commercial, administrative and military skills, and the Russian aristocracy, speaking French and becoming Westernized in the nineteenth century, depatriated itself at home, acting like foreign masters toward the peasantry. But these are details; important are the general facts of backwardness and the violence required to change it.

If I have, for the moment, filled in the abstraction with the specific represented by Soviet Russia, I can easily find other examples. Indeed, while making one qualification, I can substitute Czarist Russia. That qualification refers to the time element, since state capitalism was actually introduced at a time when Western progress was not so insistent as it is now; Peter did it essentially on his own initiative and certainly not because the Russian masses wanted to emulate the West. (It is a minor irony of history that the workers in the state plants founded by Peter organized the unions that helped put the Communists into power.) Like the Communists, Peter used state capitalism, religion and repression, and, while he did not attempt to create a new religion, he tried to swallow the old one whole by establishing himself as Patriarch of the Russian Church. His acts of repression are classics: the symbolic beard-cutting, the use of forced labor to build St. Petersburg as a revolutionary capital of Westernization. Communist theory is not necessary for the founding of the Communist state, which is a continuation of Peter's state capitalism carried to twentieth-century extremes with twentieth-century technology.

This is not to deny the sincerity of the Communists. As priests and prophets of the system, they believed that Marxism was economics and not religion. They forced themselves to become experts in an otherworldly doctrine while somnambulistically making the right basic decisions about the actual mechanism of the system. Of course, there have been many wrong decisions, some costing millions of lives. If I claim that the abstraction I have drawn does not

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demand such a high price, I must admit that the concept's realization easily permits excess. In any case, excess was a fact and the question remains: Can Communist morality survive the extremes of Stalinism?

I suggest that other moralities besides Communism have survived not too dissimilar extremes, Christianity having endured innumerable murderous episodes, from the civil wars of Alexandria through and beyond the Inquisition and the wars of the Reformation. American history is marred with the genocide practiced upon the Indians. (This latter was accomplished by a splendidly hypocritical mechanism: the settlers' presence provoked the attacks of the Indians, which, in turn, justified the use of troops. The responsibility was so fragmented that no one bore the guilt; the result, nevertheless, was genocide.) Within the broad context of world history Stalinism is not unique, and it can be explained further with reference to the details of Russian history. Dirty work had to be done; the most adept practitioner was able to use the same techniques to capture control from his somewhat milder colleagues. Trained in the blacker areas of conspiracy, Stalin transforms the state into conspiracy and even attacks the power that maintains him: the officer corps, the painfully trained engineers and administrators, the Communist party itself. But there was a limit.

Post-Stalin history provides some reassurance about the stubbornness of human decency and common sense in the face of a hurricane of evil. Refusing to accept the reversal of values promulgated by the Stalinist state, the Russian people demanded and welcomed a more rational order. Despite present injustices, the changes for the better have been important: disappearance of the labor camps and overt terror, reduction of the citizen's fear of the state, a greater attention by the state to human needs. Life in the Soviet Union is still monstrous according to our standards; we have no right to apply them. The Soviet morality remains triumphant.

Comprising greater magnitudes than the difference between Stalin and Khrushchev, the changes in Soviet Russia deserve closer

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study. For this summation, it is easily possible to disengage two opposing dynamics that explain many of the interior tensions of the Soviet state and suggest the direction of newer developments. The effects on Soviet morality are less equivocal than the implications relevant to the problem of the peace.

One dynamic, which can be called the reactionary or Stalinist tendency, is a drive toward more power by the Communist party. Justifying itself in the name of the party's identity with an abstract and idealized proletariat, it derives its strength from the simple human desire for aggrandizement. Such a dynamic is a commonplace; every kind of organization, from a suburban garden club to General Motors, is a field for similar power development. The Communist phenomenon becomes obscene because of the party's central position and the lack of any comparable opposition force.

Nevertheless, Soviet society does provide an opposition of growing strength despite its fragmentation. Among the resisting institutions are the military and that part of the administration not completely dominated by the party. Moreover, the Soviet people resist in various ways outside the institutional structure. It is the total of these various types of opposition that provide a dynamic capable of halting the party momentum at a certain point.

In the developing resistance to the party, the changes in the Soviet people are important. Massive repression had been necessary to nourish the young revolutionary state, but that repression had origins that antedated the tension between progress-in-the-abstract and a static status quo. For repression, as a casual reading of nineteenth-century Russian literature shows, was a common idiom of action. The writers describe how the peasantry interrupts its winter torpor by wife-beating, rape and drunkenness, and Tolstoi records his disgust at the demand of his peasants for beatings as a sign that their master cared. Authority had to be brutal to communicate with the mass of the people.

The age of Tolstoi and Turgenev is still close enough to demand retention of a measure of harshness. We should remember that we required centuries to pass beyond the torture rack into the age of the writ of habeas corpus. It is thus an ignorant and useless righteousness to condemn the Soviet state for the survivals of an

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older Russian past. (Similarly, it is unkind for an Englishman to condemn us because we kill disaproportionately more persons by private murder: annually about eight thousand, compared to one hundred and seventy in Great Britain. We are not as civilized as the British.)

As Soviet Russia continues to change, we can expect that the antiparty force will continue to grow stronger because the vigor of the state demands it. Well beyond the early violences of its industrial revolution and arrived at its late Victorian age, the Soviet state must soften the primitive discipline into a form permitting more efficient management of its increasingly sophisticated human resources. The agronomist son of a peasant prefers not to be whipped, and the great new classes of teachers, technicians and administrators demand a greater freedom and responsibility, refusing to adjust their minds from the intricacies of their professions to the unsatisfactory and false simplicities of party dogma. Thus does a policy of pure power defeat itself, and with this continuing development, we can hope for a closer approach to Western morality, toward a mutual recognition of a community of interests.

Time lags will continue to maintain their exacerbating character. In an international sense they take on harsher outlines against a non-Soviet background, where the unhappy features of Soviet Russian life spill over the nation's borders. Here, the mingling of two time zones results in the grotesque tragedy of the satellite nations. More advanced than the Russians, not requiring the violent machinery of Soviet state capitalism, the Hungarians, West Slavs, East Germans and others are experiencing the worst kind of colonialism, a dominion in which the servant plays the master. I can offer no present comfort; we are trading a minority's justice for a majority's survival. I can only point out that other ages have had to make similar compromises on the borderlands. Indeed, the geography of this compromise has changed little. For similar reasons Christendom permitted the Balkans to exist in Turkish captivity through the centuries.

If we mourn the satellite peoples, we must admit that another aspect of the world Communist presence is infinitely more important: Red China. Out of this immensity, a population approach-

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ing seven hundred million, I can touch on only a few of the significant elements. Consider the people themselves. The Chinese are an enormously able nation, drawing cultural nourishment from a civilization of great age; they were sophisticated philosophers and administrators when the West was barbarian. Now aroused, they can easily master the whole range of Western science and technology. Although they suffer many weaknesses at their present stage, they have a young revolutionary *élan* as subjective compensation of great force. We can expect them to survive internal disasters, as the Soviet Russians did, to develop a unitary national strength of a presently unimaginable magnitude.

The implications of the doubled national power of the great Communist states can be frightening. Without presuming prophecy, I suggest that the expanding Chinese dynamism will be a growing danger for the West—and for Soviet Russia. It would be foolish to predict a sharp break between the two Communist powers in the near future, but I cannot believe that the Chinese, with their superior numbers and a sense of revolutionary purity already partially lost by the Russians, will continue to accept an elder brother's leadership with docility. Indeed, unmistakable signs of restiveness are already in evidence. On the other hand, the Russians will strain against the insistent argument of the Chinese statistic. I suggest, therefore, that we shall arrive at a point where the West lends a measure of support to the Russians. Here, a mutuality of interests will mean some loose kind of understanding with a present enemy to contain the irresponsible violences of the largest revolutionary population in the world. We have supported Tito against Stalin, and, on a world map, Russia can be viewed as a buffer state between China and the West.

It is true enough that the situation might turn into catastrophe before this historical logic has time to operate—precisely because of the friction between the two Communist powers. I interpret many of Khrushchev's aggressive actions as a reply to accusations by the Chinese and the Russian Stalinists that he is too soft toward the West. Forced to maintain a certain momentum of triumphs in a society still wracked by tensions, the Soviet leader might gamble too heavily with nuclear power. Yet Khrushchev has been careful

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not to maneuver us into a strait where the choice lies between nuclear war and an inacceptable diplomatic disaster. We can understand his pressure on Berlin as a necessary defense against the dangerous bleeding away of the East German population. This is therefore not a leading from strength, as the first principle of strategy demands, but a move impelled by weakness; and with the Berlin escape route closed, Khrushchev will be careful not to demand the impossible. Similarly, I believe that we should exercise a comparable care in avoiding the presentation of ultimate alternatives to Soviet policy. It is by remaining at one remove from the brink that the West and Soviet Russia can survive to the point where they will find themselves cooperating against Red China.

Nothing in this argument implies a radical resolution of the conflict between Soviet Russia and the West. On the contrary, it will be necessary to carry on the whole range of cold-war actions, from peripheral wars to economic competition, in order to achieve effective communication with the Russians. Diplomacy makes sense only through the presence of force, and force today subsumes within its definition the whole nuclear horror as long as one national arsenal contains nuclear arms. This means the unwhimpering acceptance of the continued risk of the ultimate war, but we cannot abolish the elementary physics of force. Without entering into the extravagant emotions of the arguments on this issue, it can be said that no one has proved that an all-out nuclear war will destroy all the world's population. If a third of the people are killed, it will leave a greater number than that with which this century began.

Anything less than a dynamic competition with the Soviets, including an imaginative and subtle leadership exercised in the uncommitted portions of the world, will mean a not-very-slow suicide. Anything more, a rigidity over second-rank issues, will mean a nuclear disaster. It is within these limits that Western policy must maneuver.

Any effort to illuminate our foreign policy position emphasizes the need for a deeper understanding with the Russians—including an agreement in terms of a common morality. We must take the initiative, since the Marxist morality is greener than ours, and we cannot expect the Soviets so readily to give up their belief in the

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irreducible evil of capitalistic society. Nevertheless the Khrushchev generation is increasingly pragmatic, and its awareness of the realities will persuade it to look away from the evil as much as possible. Obliged to deal more intensely with the outer world than their predecessors, the present Soviet leaders cannot so easily deny realities unsanctioned by Marxist dogma. For ourselves, we can deal with the Soviets more efficiently when we restrain our own dogmas. Refusing to seek an unnecessary Soviet evil, refusing to condemn the Russians for the objective circumstances that made them what they are, we should be able to establish mutuality within the frame of the human decencies. We need not refer to a parochial Western religion or the self-righteous claims of an irrelevant international law to agree on honesty, fairness, the value of human life—and love. Let us not fear the banality of it.

Circumstances are driving us toward each other. In terms of action, the West and the Soviets are mutely cooperating at a number of points of peril. In terms of interior morphology, the West has found national planning to be necessary to improve national efficiency, and this centralization of its economies, combined with other developments, has an unmistakable socialist coloration. This is not to predict a gentler sovietization of the West, as the previous comments were not meant to anticipate the introduction of free enterprise into the Soviet Union. However regrettable we may find it privately, the state is becoming more important in the West; however reluctant we judge it to be, the Soviet state is becoming more responsive to its population. Thus are the hard lines of Western and Soviet dogma becoming blurred under the intense, but still supportable, heat of a necessarily dynamic coexistence. We are close enough to hear each other. We must speak the words of a common language of morality.

October 17, 1962

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Humming

JOHN HOLLANDER

O summer, summer! somewhere a seventeenth season of heat
Is always exploding in roses; and broods of impulse, feeding
No more on their stored winters, released into later stages
Of being, buzzing, emerge from most of their lives' graves.

These nymphs the winter would perpetuate, secure
In their twigs, but the crash of thundering summer over the full
Cornfields has plucked from the ground the passionate cicadas,
Free: to breed for a week in the maple branches, shaded
From the wide, white sunlight exhausting the best of their lives, to die
Suddenly, as when the sunlight baked on the singing highway
Is cut by the broad blade of shadow from the planting
Of forty yards of trees at a crossroads perhaps.
Sidewalks in the cool glade of sundown are strewn with shells,
Skulls of the dead nymphs, husks of what are not really selves,
Crunched underfoot, like piles of every dead July
Before a seventeenth summer.
Emerging creatures, surprised
By suddenness of growth cry out as do these bugs
With a humming that sounds to outlive the whole of the long summer.
It never does. Our overhearing hearts are never inured
To the drone of such a demanding band of musicians, whose furied
Continuous buzzing drills into our lives, agape

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With a pressure that lies somewhere between persuasion and pain.
Agape. Like a rose unwormed yet, without having tasted of August
Love, I once in my seventeenth summer exposed all the forests
Of my mouth to the trill of the tireless boring insect, the sweat
Wrinkling the leather of the dentist's chair, defenseless
Against the invasion of pain in the secret places of budding
Eros; the whirring of other summers' eventual flourishing
Deferred to the eternal burr that sounded from somewhere inside
me
And that I believed in my seventeenth summer could never die.
Could pain, like noise, become the condition of life? Montaigne,
Quiet Montaigne, raked up the remains of an aging fable
Which held in the end that the spheres' music was always inaudible
Because it was always there, like the whitening Nile, still roaring
Down from its cataracts, noises of water becoming the silence
Of life. Mundane music: unfelt along its banks for miles
By those who lived there.
The humming of human time is loud
And crowded with single, unbearable voices, that, hour by hour,
Blend more into timeless buzzing: the lightning mordent of high
Tension wires strung skyward across hot green fields; sixty-cycle
Hum in the bloodstream of music in crowded, unscreened rooms,
The language of varying tone and the scream of song confusing
Its steadying drone; the jammed car horn heard from stories up
And blocks away, while the slowly dropping summer sun
Lowers a reddening yolk into its cup in New Jersey.
Even the maddened humming, wordless, always wordless,

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We do ourselves, that is never an act of speech, like denying,
Blaming or pledging or lying, nor the raising of voice to heights
That singing is: this is the business of being. To have heard
These undying cicadas, immortal while yet they live, is to burn
For a time in the moment itself. As the hot convertible,
Humming along the black macadam we all are, disturbs
The avenued peace of trees at the side of the road, the sudden
Noise of a horde of cicadas overcomes the surrounding summer
With a sound louder than life. Then, as our car emerges
From the singing glade into dead, white sun, the silence turns
On like a flipped switch, with a sharp crack of nothing,
Beginning the end of the humming, the humming, the end of the
humming,
The end of remembering happening somewhere ahead in the dust.

✪ JOHN HOLLANDER's first volume of poetry, *A Crackling of Thorns,* was chosen for the Yale Series of Younger Poets in 1958. His second volume, *Movie-Going,* was published this summer. Mr. Hollander teaches at Yale University and is *Partisan Review*'s editorial associate for poetry.

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Petra

The Excavation of the Main Theater

PHILIP C. HAMMOND

DEEP WITHIN THE BARREN WASTELANDS of the trans-Jordanic desert lies Petra, the "rose-red city . . . half as old as time." The ancient city is almost surrounded by gloriously hued cliffs of Nubian sandstone, towering a thousand feet above the valley floor. To this magnificence has been added the artistry and skill of man, who carved and shaped the natural beauty of the stone into gigantic facades, lofty obelisks and a myriad of cultic devices. The colors of the primeval dawn have been frozen in stone, and the pitiful hope of pagan immortality chiseled within its heart.

The rock-girt fastness of the site is usually entered through a winding cleft, called the Siq, which penetrates the eastern ridge, and which is solemnly declared by local folklore to have been wrought by the wand of Moses as he smote the rock to bring forth water for the wandering Israelites. In Roman times this route had a well-paved road; today the water-washed boulders of two thousand years have taken its place. Entering this awesome geologic accident from the blinding light of the desert day prepares one for the wonder of the ancient site within. High above one's head the sky is but a deep blue line; all is shadow below. The cries of native boys, the clatter of hooves, the chatter of wheeling birds all echo a timeless cacophony which seems distilled from the weathered stone itself. The way finally opens into the valley, where the main stream bed, Wadi Musa, meanders through the ancient city area until it escapes through the western ridge. Other routes—the dusty tracks of an-

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cient trade—enter the area from north and south, laboriously rising and dipping to the valley's torrent-scarred contours.

Defensibility, accessibility and an ample supply of water have made this site attractive for human habitation from Paleolithic times onward, as the medley of flint hand axes, Iron Age cisterns, Hellenistic architectural legacies, Nabataean carvings, Roman coins, Byzantine crosses and the distinctive pottery of medieval Arabs mutely proclaim. Petra served as an Edomite refuge, under the biblical sobriquet of "the Rock," as a Nabataean commercial capital, with the ancient name dignified by Greek translation, as a down-at-the-heels Roman colony and, finally, as a major link in the chain of Crusader forts of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. Sometime renowned as the controlling hub of the vast trade routes that stretched from China and India, from the fabulous spice and incense lands of Southern Arabia, from the cotton fields of Egypt and from the mines of Sinai, Petra straddled the great "King's Highway" from north to south, and its major tributary from east to west, to Gaza and the coast. It was this lifeline of commerce that enriched the East and surfeited the appetites of the West. It was this line, too, that brought the art, literature, manners—and ultimately the legions—of the West to the East. In all of these affairs, the geographic position of "the Rock" made her and her inhabitants sovereigns—and slaves.

It was natural protection that attracted the Edomites of biblical times. The rugged peak known as Umm il-Biyara, "the Mother of Cisterns," attests to their occupation. Rock-cut cisterns, typical in their Iron Age construction, dot that mountaintop. Rock-cut corridors, easily sealed from enemy attack, led up to the summit. Here was safety, painfully hacked from solid rock. Yet this very Rock, says the biblical account, was the one from whose edge Amaziah, king of Judah, cast ten thousand prisoners to their doom.

As the armies of Alexander marched unchecked across the northern reaches of Syro-Palestine, out of the Southern desert of the fourth century B.C. there streamed a nomadic horde called the Nabaṭu. Strangely, for Bedouins, these people turned to piracy and preyed upon the lucrative shipping of the Red Sea. Finally the

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Egyptian Navy routed them from their lair and drove them from the sea. Now they turned to brigandage—and waxed fat from the rich caravans that had begun to bring the wealth of the South and East along the land routes. Sometime in the course of years, they perceived that much effort could be saved by substituting protection for pilferage, and a commercial empire was born that ultimately controlled a thousand towns, cities and outposts stretching from the borders of Egypt in the south to Damascus in the north. The Nabaṭu became the Nabataeans, and Petra became one of the most powerful caravan cities to grace the ancient East. Pliny tells us that a twenty-five percent duty was levied upon all goods passing through the land and the simple Bedouin people described by Strabo became the luxury-loving cosmopolites of Diodorus' day. Magnificent monuments to the dead were commissioned by the living—borrowed in outline from the masterpieces of Egypt and the West. Coinage, ceramics, statuary, all reached a pinnacle scarcely attained by any other native culture in Syro-Palestine in ancient times. Under the vigorous Aretas IV in the early days of the present era, the Nabataean kingdom achieved international importance. Side by side with commerce went agriculture. The Nabataeans perfected hydraulic engineering far beyond those who had preceded them—or those who followed. Water control and irrigation were brought to a level unmatched until modern times. With this priceless ingredient, groves grew thick, grains flourished and the vine bowed low under the weight of its fruits; prosperity was at every hand.

But such a situation could not endure in the face of Roman imperialistic policy. Attempts to unseat the Nabataeans, by military means or conspiracy, were repulsed by force, diplomacy or bribery as long as strong kings occupied the Nabataean throne. With the successors of Aretas IV, however, weakness gradually became apparent, and by 106 A.D. all the Nabataean kingdom had been absorbed, and Petra, herself, heard the measured tread of marching legions through the Siq. The trade lines had long since been diverted to the north, and although Petra enjoyed a brief spurt of renewal, even becoming a full-fledged "colony," decay had set in, and the

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ancient glory of the site was but the babble of old men's memories.

With the passing of Rome in the Near East, Petra entertained some slight Byzantine settlement, but her days of power were at an end. Indeed even her ancient name was forgotten, and the district gradually became known simply as "The Valley of Moses." In the eleventh century, Baldwin I was (ecumenically) summoned to the aid of the Greek "monks of St. Aaron," whose monastery was perched on nearby Jebel Harun (Aaron's Mountain). When that worthy Frankish monarch began his sweeping fortification of the trans-Jordanic area, for both defense and profit, the strategic location of Petra was not overlooked. A major fief was settled at El-Wu'eira, just outside the Siq. The resulting fortress was augmented by smaller police posts inside the ancient city itself. When the crusading armies of the Latin Kingdom met their disastrous defeat at the hands of Saladin in 1187 A.D., the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was echoed at Petra, and "Le Château de la Vallée de Moise," with its related installations, fell into ruins and was forgotten. Geography became meaningless as all the Near East came beneath the Crescent, and both tax collection and policing ceased to be problems.

On August 22, 1812, John Ludwig Burckhardt, Swiss-born traveler, adventurer and Koranic scholar, rediscovered the ancient site. Disguised as a Moslem sheikh (Ibrahim ibn 'Abdullah) and leading a somewhat reluctant goat for sacrifice at Jebel Harun, Burckhardt was guided through the Siq and into the stronghold of "the Rock"—the first Western visitor since the Crusades. In his voluminous account of his travels in Syria and the Holy Land, Burckhardt described the ancient city site as he saw it. This tale of a "lost city," fantastic in appearance and spectacular in handiwork, soon piqued the curiosity of other travelers and wandering scholars. Its identity regained, men began to search out Petra's history and to restore its ancient fame.

Today, the city of the Rock attracts scholar and tourist alike to the warmth of its rose-red glow. For the archaeologist, above all, Petra represents a vast storehouse of untapped riches. On every side are studies to be made and new secrets to be read—and beneath

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one's feet sleeps a whole city waiting to be wakened from the sands of two millenia.

It was to this exotic spot, replete with the historical heritage of the ancient Near East from the Stone Age to Islam, that the American Expedition to Petra made its way in the summer of 1961, to excavate the Main Theater, Petra's community center. The Expedition worked in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of the Hashemite Kingdom, under the field direction of the author, as part of the large-scale, long-range governmental program aimed at the scientific excavation, restoration and preservation of the ancient monuments of Jordan. Equipment was brought in on donkey back, camp was established in the tomb-caves of El-Habis, and the Expedition set to work. A preliminary sounding operation was conducted for the Department of Antiquities at an ancient tomb-site just outside the Siq. Upon its completion, attention was focused upon the major project of the season—the stratigraphic unraveling of the history of the Main Theater, from modern surface to bedrock.

The Theater at Petra has its *auditorium* and *orchestra* carved into the side of a mountain, and hence has been known and reported since the days of Burckhardt himself. About thirty-three rows of seats, with an estimated seating capacity of three thousand, have been counted since the inquisitiveness of the British traveler, Charles Irby. The triple division into *cavea, orchestra* and *scaena*—still seen in theaters today—was clearly recognizable even before excavation. The plan is Roman: a half-circle, with stage and backdrop along the diameter and with three levels of seats, befitting the social classes in the days of the Caesars. The *orchestra* was no longer a place of acting, and probably no longer a seating place either. A neat boundary wall protected the lowest level of seats (the *ima cavea*), reserved for the noble, the rich and the important. The upper levels were reached by stairways and broad aisles. On the right side of the *auditorium* another entrance had been added to that commonly used by the holders of the lowest seats, so that lesser ranks could find their places without disturbing their betters. High above the *orchestra* floor the *summa cavea* provided seating

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for women and children. At each side, walls rose to prevent gate-crashers and nonpaying guests. No seats are marked, and "reservations" for choice shows probably were made by the foot.

The stage area of the Theater is a combination of rock-cutting (for the understage rooms, called the *hyposcenium)* and built masonry (particularly the backdrop, or *scaena*). Two main entrances to the seating area lead into the Theater from each side, and the front of the scenery wall is pierced by a series of doors used by the actors and having conventional meaning for the plot. High above all, a complex water control system was cut into an upper gallery to convey rainwater away from the installation during the three months of winter. One, or perhaps the expected two, "boxes" (*tribunaliae*) were built above the main entrances, overlooking the stage platform, as places of honor for royalty, or for the patrons of some particular entertainment.

To accomplish the primary aim of the first season's work as efficiently as possible, it was decided to open three main trenches through the debris overlaying the Theater area. By this means the connections between *cavea* and *orchestra, orchestra* and stage, stage and *scaena,* and the evidences of their succeeding uses, could be traced. Two connecting trenches, each three meters wide, were laid out from the center of the *cavea* to the center of the main door of the backdrop (then subsurface, but amenable to calculation), perpendicular to the mathematical line of the diameter of the *orchestra.* A third trench of the same width was then laid out at right angles to the line of the others, along the probable edge of the stage, leading to the mouth of the *vomitorium* at the left of the stage. Ultimately, a fourth trench was opened from the end of the last one, leading across the stage to the backdrop, in order to check stratigraphy over the stage, itself, and to connect with modern surface at that point. Following the excavation of the main trenches, the stage area as a whole was cleared stratigraphically to determine the full plan of the *scaena,* the stage flooring and the substage structure.

As a result of the main excavation, it was possible to trace the stratigraphic history of the Theater through one hundred and

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thirty-five strata (or "levels") of use or disuse, all of which, in turn, resolved into eight clearly defined phases:

I. This period represents the actual Theater and its employment as a place of public entertainment.

II. Following the discontinuance of the Theater as such, two phases of reuse can be seen in which the area was put to other purposes. A thick wall was built over the lower rows of seats, and a drain was cut into the pavement of the stage floor.

III. Another double phase of "occupation" followed during which the area was not used at all. During this period there was a time of complete disuse, in which water-laid and wind-blown soil was deposited in a series of sandwiched layers clearly distinguishable by their consistency and color as they appear in the side of the trench walls. Some little casual occupation (probably temporary camping, or just passers-by) took place at the end of this "disuse" phase.

IV. This phase marks the main destruction of the Theater structure. Some vast natural cataclysm struck the entire valley, and the Theater, long unused, but still majestic in its lonely splendor, was shaken back and forth to its bedrock foundations. The tremendous backdrop, built of masonry and hence vulnerable, swayed this way and that until the cohesiveness of its heavy blocks could no longer stand the strain—and the entire *scaena* tumbled. Columns fell in marshaled rows, sculptured architraves crumbled to the ground, polished marble shattered in a cloud of broken cement, red-lined inscriptions became anagrams, heroic statuary toppled, and the architect's careful plan became a maze beneath tons of hewn and polished debris.

V. After the fall of the scenery, the Theater began to take on the patina of natural stratification—the alternate deposits of wind and water that mark the succession of seasons and the passage of countless years.

VI. As the years went by, however, the sequestered covert of the sculptured *auditorium* tempted use again, and there followed two phases of robbery and reuse. Digging deeply into the debris beneath, the robbers ferreted out column drums and masonry blocks to form the foundations of a long wall parallel to the stump of the *scaena* facade. In this way they constructed a crude rectangular "pen," perhaps to house flocks during the winter months. In the course of time an additional wall line,

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less sturdy and less straight, was added to the first to extend the area of inclosure. Stratigraphically, the picture of this operation is as clearly defined as if one had stood watching the robber masons at work. A long row of column drums was rolled into place, other stone placed behind, and loose dirt packed in between—in eloquent disregard by man of his ancestors' art.

VII. Again the area fell into neglect, and the only occupation for a time was the chance stopping of those making their way elsewhere. Here and there we found a broken pot, a few sherds, a scrap of bone—as even the great open pen was no longer put to use.

VIII. After some indeterminate time even the casual visitor no longer bothered to climb the rising mound of debris, but walked on through the wadi in front, or used the higher level of the rock-cut seats as a giant stairway. With stone the cheapest commodity of Petra, no one even deigned to rob the choice cut blocks, and the centuries piled even more wind and water-borne debris over the ancient ruins.

But what of the Theater as it was originally when used to delight, to edify and to horrify the inhabitants of the Rock of Nabatene? From the evidence of stone, standing ruins, architectural documentation and reasoned guess, the appearance of Petra's community center can be reconstructed.

The *auditorium*, with its upper drainage system, had an upper passage gallery above the triple *cavea*. The latter was divided into six *cunei*, or wedge-shaped seating sections, by stairways that rose from the *orchestra* floor. A broad *praecinctio* divided each of the class sections of the *cavea* and facilitated the entrance and exit of the spectators. A *bisellium*, or double-width seating space, for the portable chairs of important citizens and public officials, seems to have been provided at the bottom of the *ima cavea*. Two barrel-vaulted *vomitoria (dextrum* and *sinistrum)*, along with a rock-cut *aditus* leading to the upper levels, opened into the *auditorium* area. *Tribunaliae* graced the tops of the *vomitoria* vaults. The barrier walls on both sides of the *cavea* appear to have had small rooms associated with them, possibly for storing equipment.

The *orchestra* of the Theater, with its Roman semicircular

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plan, was hewn out of bedrock. The *proscenium* was of built masonry, with the *finitio proscenii,* or stage front, laid directly along the diameter of the *orchestra.* The *hyposcenium* was constructed by simply leaving bedrock piers freestanding when the *orchestra* was cut.

Over the piers was built the stage proper, with facing orthostats in front, with the pavement of the stage floor carried by arches between the piers of the *hyposcenium.* On top of the arches a rough pavement was set, which was in turn covered by finely cut slabs of better stone. Thus a series of substage "rooms" was left between the piers. There were stored the dramatic machinery and other paraphernalia necessary for stage effects in ancient times. A stairway led from the *orchestra* floor to the stage at each side, in accord with the theatrical conventions of the day. The use of stone paving for the stage floor is a refinement over most provincial theaters, where wooden planking was commonly used. The relative scarcity of wood, in the face of the almost unending supply of stone at Petra, of course, permitted the apparent luxury there.

A curtain slot opened into the stage pavement on both sides of the central niche of the stage front. In Roman times the curtain (*auleum*) was lowered into its slot on telescoping rods at the beginning of each performance, and raised at the end. Whether the stage (or even the whole *auditorium*) was roofed is still a question. The presence of davit holes in the *orchestra* floor close to the stage area would suggest the possibility that some temporary awning was used, but this too remains to be determined.

So far, Herculaneum seems to be the best parallel to the stage and *scaena* arrangement at Petra. But how far this indicates chronological significance will depend upon other factors. The possibility of a "cultural lag" is always to be considered, especially in the provinces. The stage height is presently about one and two-tenths meters, which, with allowances for pavement, is not far from the five feet stipulated by that arbiter of Roman architectural standards, Vitruvius Pollio.

It is the *scaena,* or backdrop, that is perhaps of most general architectual interest. Over twenty feet wide in its original form, its

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double walls are still traceable, and the precise plan of its decorated face (the *scaena frons*) is clearly evident, happily preserved by the debris that covered it. This backdrop was constructed by the method Vitruvius referred to with some disparagement as too hasty. The two walls, with dressed faces, were built with an intervening space, the gap simply filled with rubble and mortar. The sheer massiveness of the *scaena* permitted its base to be preserved during the general destruction. As a consequence, it still stands to an average of four or five courses in height. This, of course, makes it possible to be quite positive about the plan, since it is obvious and measurable. Fortunately, architectural details of facings, moldings and similar evidences of technique lay beneath the rubble—some still *in situ.*

The solicitude of the builders over the Vitruvian "standard" further assists in the analysis of the structure, by making it more or less predictable. The "module" or building unit employed throughout the entire installation was roughly one Roman foot (c. 29.5/6 cm.), and all measurements were in accord with it. The building blocks, of local sandstone ashlar, neatly dressed with typical Nabataean diagonal lines, follow the pattern of $1 \times 1 \times 2$ Roman feet. These were laid in isodomic coursing, in the pattern called by Vitruvius "emplecton" ("weaving through"). This is essentially a header-stretcher arrangement designed to give both horizontal and lateral stability to a wall. The entire face of the *scaena frons,* in the story still standing, was then plastered with a thick layer of mortar as the cement for marble facings held in place by pins of bronze set in plugging-holes in the ashlar blocks. Some of the marble facings were found still in place, many pins were recovered, and the "pattern" of plugging holes in certain areas even permitted accuracy of measurement of marble slabs no longer there. The plan of the *scaena frons* is symmetrical, having been laid out upon a series of equilateral triangles inscribed in the circle that formed the basis of the *orchestra.* The large central doorway, conventionally called the "Royal Door," was flanked by two rectangular niches. Beside these were wider niches containing stairways to the side doors. Niches flanked these stairs, and then came the outsets for the

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versurae doors that block off the stage on both ends. The total length of the *scaena frons* across the stage proper is about one hundred and sixty-nine feet. The facade of the scenery in a Roman period theater was originally supposed to have represented a palace, with the various doors leading, conventionally, into the palace rooms, or into the countryside or into the market place. No trace of any movable scenery, usually an adjunct to the *scaena* decoration in Roman times, has yet been found.

Careful plotting and measurement of the debris permits something to be said concerning the elevation of the *scaena,* also. Of first importance here are the columns that adorned the facade. Although some individual variation was evident, two main types were isolated. One variety measured about fifty-five centimeters in diameter, the other about sixty-three centimeters. Since both stories and columnar rows usually are to be found on theater *scaenae,* at least two size varieties would normally be expected. The columns were built of a series of drums, well cut, highly polished and unfluted. They had square tie holes in the flat sides of each drum for joining and aligning purposes. The columns were set on torus bases, which in turn rested on plinth slabs. The capitals recovered were, with one exception, uniformly Nabataean in order. This fact is significant not only for chronology, but also for identifying the builders. The single exception to the Nabataean order was one poorly cut capital that seemed to be a local version of the Ionic order—but made to be seen from the wrong side. The use of columnar decoration is typically Roman in origin. The entablatures of the Theater elevation can also be reconstructed in some detail. They, like the columnar order, represent a classical prototype interpreted by native craftsmen, and with a completely local flavor. In general they appear to resemble the entablatures on other Petraean monuments: an architrave with a single fascia and capping, a frieze with running inscription and a cornice with a combination of denticulate, modillion-and-disc and crowning moldings. It would seem that these are to be related to Roman Corinthian, as far as classical types are concerned.

The facings used to adorn the *scaena frons* are worthy of note,

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too. The marble used for this purpose was sawed into thin slabs about one centimeter thick and varied in color from pure white to dark grey. A quantity of excellent bloodred breccia was also found, especially in the vicinity of the two niches flanking the central door, which may indicate its original location. This same use of slabs (*crustae*), in a panelled pattern, was followed on the *vomitoria* faces, and the total effect must have been little short of spectacular. Since marbles of this sort were probably all imported, the lavishness of their use at Petra is a further indication of the relative prosperity of the period in which the Theater was constructed. The same implication can be drawn from the thick marble door moldings, some still in place along the lower doorway courses.

The Theater also contributed some interesting examples of cement work. This medium is almost a trademark of the Roman period and appears to have some chronological significance here. Most important for the latter is the method employed to consolidate masonry vaults, as seen in the *vomitoria* passages. Apparently, after the vaults were completed, in the conventional fashion of stone-builders, a layer of pottery-filled cement was poured over the top surface. This, the Romans had finally realized, would relieve the danger of lateral thrust by distributing it and concentrating its force downward to the imposts. Ultimately, wherever possible the Romans used concrete for vaulting in place of the more laboriously built (and less stable) vaults of stone. At Petra the scant amount of cement used to stabilize the masonry vaults would seem to indicate a very early stage in architectural awareness of its possibilities.

Inscribed fragments were uncovered during the course of the excavations, but no connected text could be put together. The first block discovered, appropriately enough, bore most of the word for "theater," in large Greek letters. Other smaller inscribed bits, in lesser script, and often with red paint in the inscribed letters, turned up as the excavations progressed. Their loci pointed to a running inscription along the entablature friezes. Other epigraphic information of a more productive nature was secured from the undersides of column drums. A series of drums came to light bearing single Nabataean letters in combination with numerical slashes. It was

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proposed early in the excavation that the Nabataean letters indicated the geographical location of individual drums along the row of columns, and that the slashes signified the vertical position of the individual drum in question. Happily this hypothesis was proven correct without a doubt by the discovery of whole columns lying in order as they had fallen—with the slash marks on successive ones increasing in number as the drums rose within the column, and the Nabataean letters varying with the rows.

The only piece of statuary recovered during the course of the excavation was a monumental marble statue of Hercules—headless, and with arms and legs broken off, but unmistakable because of his draped lion skin. Since the head had been affixed separately, by means of a bronze pin, some hope of its recovery still exists. The pure white marble of the piece was of fine quality and had been skillfully worked and polished. Thanks to the mathematical canons of ancient art, enough of the statue remained to permit calculating its full height, seven feet, five inches. The closest parallel to both style of carving and subject type seems to be the Doryphorus of Polycleitus, a much copied figure in the Neo-Attic revival of the Roman period. Since Hercules was the patron of both drama and trade, his presence at the Theater in Petra is most appropriate. It must be noted still further that according to Roman mythology one of the boon companions of Hercules was Dionysus-Bacchus, god of the vine. The Nabataeans, rapidly changing from an austere desert people, had soon adopted viticulture from their more sedentary neighbors—and their originally austere and abstemious desert god, Dusares, became a tippler, too. When the Romans finally recognized the presence of the Nabataean culture in the Near East, they readily identified the native god with their own ivy-decked lord of the grape. Hence, Hercules at Petra was in company with an old friend.

No final chronological conclusions can yet be drawn. But the purely Nabataean orders, the close adherence to Vitruvius, the parallels to the plan, the building techniques, the ceramic indications and the early native cultural prominence of the site all suggest that the Theater was built during or soon after the period of

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Aretas IV, when Petra, reaching the height of her native power, was characterized by cultural eclecticism and possessed fabulous wealth, but was not yet beneath full-scale Roman dominance.

The major results of the first season at the Theater lie in the stratigraphic analysis of the use of the site, the reestablishment of the Theater plan for the first time since the destruction of the site, and the collection from the architectual details of data that will furnish important source material for study of the provincial theater in other areas. The specific data from the present excavations, when coupled with the methodology applied, will ultimately permit a more definitive analysis of the role of the Theater at Petra, and perhaps a more precise discussion of the chronology of the entire site than has yet been possible. In place of the casual evaluations offered by visitors in the past, the excavations at the Theater in Petra have revealed a new chapter in the history of Roman period theatrical architecture. However remote the connections may seem between the ruins of a provincial playhouse, lost to time and memory beneath shifting sands, and the bustle and glitter of the neon-trimmed show palaces of Broadway, the fine thread that stretches from Aeschylus to O'Neill and from *The Frogs* to *Pajama Game* still binds together the dramatic arts, and stages are still trodden today as they were when the Greeks first introduced the mask in the name of Religion—and the Romans moved out the altar to make Drama sell.

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An Unprofessional Eye

Suspended Youth

BENJAMIN DEMOTT

We escape
Down the cloud ladder, but the problem has not been solved
—John Ashbery

Sports event by billing, allegory in essence, the "Sixth World Parachuting Championship, August 11-September 3, Orange, Mass., USA" was pure farce in circumstance.

First announcements of the "attraction" appeared in the New England vacation-time calendar—a gatherum of broiler festivals and chautauquas in which the word *champion* points as often at potatoes as at athletes. Bad weather, which made chaos of the schedule of contests, and an impossibly complicated scoring system, which necessitated the use of digital computers, meant that spectators at the event were never clear whether they were cheering underdogs or front-runners. Efforts to dignify the competition by importing officialdom to observe it led to inelegant vaudeville turns. (A member of the United States House of Representatives donned a parachute and leaped merrily from the guests' platform into the arms of some jumpers from Rumania—laughing dark-eyed women who accepted his embrace but fled from his French.) Efforts to encourage foreign competitors, whose hostel was a regional high school renamed "Friendship House," into intimacy with green hills and still valleys fell afoul of highway hazards. (A number of visitors went no farther than a neighboring Twist and Limbo Lounge where they were caught in the strong toils of a belly-dancer called Cashmere Bouquet.) The penultimate days of the event were scarred by a national defense alert, which grounded civilian aircraft and brought the competition to an abrupt unscheduled close, and by a skydiving spectacular, produced by members of the United States Air Force parachuting team, which although gravely described drew chuckles even from nonpurists. (In its feature, a "Duel in the Sky," free-falling jumpers dashed over the heavens before opening their chutes, firing Very pistols at each other and activating red and blue smoke grenades attached to their heels; the vivid air was signed with this *kitsch* long after the team's descent.) And the meet ended with a ludicrous, cold-war strike: jumpers in full gear mounted their planes for final leaps and then, sulking instead of jumping (while computers fumed), they rode idly about the skies—in protest against decisions seemingly prejudicial to the Czech and Russian teams.

To the money men who had underwritten the affair the fact of its commercial failure was, naturally, no joke. Optimists all, these figures had labored energetically from the start. Invitations to compete in the event were extended to dozens of countries by a "championship committee" whose advisers included Vice-President Johnson, Governor Rockefeller, Senator Magnuson, Thomas J. Watson, Jr. and many other leaders of moment. (No fewer than twenty-four nations—Poland, Yugoslavia, Israel,

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India, Spain, Japan and South Africa among them—sent teams.) A subsidy of a hundred thousand dollars was extracted from the state, which created a special commission to "assist in planning, promotion and development." Shepley, Bulfinch, Richardson & Abbott were retained to design a "championship amphitheater." Townspeople in a dozen neighboring communities were pressed into service on housing, coordination and "protocol" committees. The flow of notable visitors was constantly restimulated. (A sample planeload from Washington included one major general, one naval captain, one U.S.I.S. director of broadcasting service, three congressmen, numberless aides and a representative of the special division of cultural affairs of the Department of State.) And, at the appearance of the first signs of trouble at the gate, backers, officials and competitors launched upon enterprises in public persuasion that were remarkable for intensity and inventiveness.

As might be guessed, not every claim made in the course of these undertakings was of the kind that wins instant assent. The "President" of the meet, a comparatively restrained booster, limited himself to the assertion that it was "a revolutionary social step to have made the frontier of the sky available to the general public within reasonable limits of safety and expense." The "Executive Director," disposed to an esthetic line of appeal (during the "Duel in the Sky" this gentleman seized a microphone and cried out to the sparse crowd: "Friends, free-fall parachuting is an *art,* not a stunt!") avoided hysteria in presenting it. And the series of announcers who stressed the significance of the competition as a venture in international palsmanship ("The jumper now leaving Friendship Bowl is Evgenij Tkatchenko. What about a great hand for this great jumper from the U.S.S.R.") meant only to sound hospitable. But other voices were less reasonable. One member of the international panel of judges —Captain James Perry of Fort Bragg, a trim young man on whose tattooed breast a covey of bluebirds was pinned in flight—sought to convince interviewers that skydiving was better regarded as a sound means of transportation than as an objectionable form of daredevilism. ("It's like getting on a bus and going to work.") Reporters who talked with Mr. James Arender, a twenty-two-year-old Oklahoman who resembles the late actor James Dean, and who currently reigns as parachuting champion of the world, were persuaded that jumping improves a man's literary taste. ("For relaxation," wrote an impressed correspondent for *Newsweek,* "Jim Arender likes to read Dostoevski . . . discuss Voltaire.") And Mr. Lewis Sanborn, safety officer for the event and among the most perfervid of the chuting zealots, defended the sport by arguing, first, that parachuting offered a way of teaching responsibility to delinquents ("you take these kids hanging around stoops and corners in the city, if they had a chance at this they'd learn what it means to be *responsible")* and, second, that jumping experience helps to beef up bloodless businessmen ("executives who start parachuting become very aggressive in their line of work").

In these and other remarks of the principals there were hints of a drivenness that clearly deserved sympathy—but not even the sympathetic were deeply moved by the financial catastrophe itself. In gambling and losing, the promoters had at least bought the pleasure of a wager. And the competing teams, hurtling through individual and group events testing "accuracy" (in target landings) and "style" (in delayed-fall execution of turns, loops, backloops and the like) were presumably competing for the joy of the contest rather than for the approbation of millions. The chief figure in the inner drama of Friendship Bowl was that of Youth in the large, not that of the luckless entrepreneur or bookish champion. And while there was a lesson or two written in the red ink of the final ledger, the themes of the airy allegory were at once grander and more pathetic than any commonplace defeat of greed.

To say this isn't of course to write off as inconsequential every interest in a jumpers' meet save that of youth: techniques developed by sport parachutists have had

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military applications and may someday be of use to astral tourists. It is to say that at bottom the campaign to bring the event to America was a youth crusade. In recent years sport parachuting has enjoyed a small boom. (City folk themselves have become fascinated, and a new jumpers' center opened this fall in New Jersey to "serve" them.) But in the same period concern has mounted about the parachutist's Image as a reckless scape whose game of superlunary Chicken is offensive to public morals. Thousands of undergraduates and apprentices in the established professions (members of the Parachute Club of America) were convinced that an international competition, drawing huge interested crowds, not to speak of sportswriters hungry for copy, might banish the odor of the illicit that clings to the sport. And it was their enthusiasm (together with reports of attendance at meets held abroad—in Moscow, Sofia, Saint Yan, France) that turned up the financial backing.

The intensity of the jumpers' concern about public relations is not at first glance easy to fathom or credit. On its face the Parachute Club's estimate of the amount of hostility directed at its doings appeared extravagant—few citizens have felt constrained to work out clear positions concerning the merits of leaping from airplanes. Furthermore, in the psychological landscape of sport parachuting in general, worry and concern are less apparent than the familiar arrogance of the risk-taker, and the self-satisfaction of youth in possession of secret status. That this should be so isn't mysterious. The adult world increasingly tends to define achievement in terms of "leisure activity," rather than in terms of labor or profession, and, aware of this, a young man whose recreation nicely separates him from the commonalty would be refractory if he failed to admire himself. Yet the parachutist's self-admiration does lessen the impact of his contention that worry about the Image disturbs his sleep.

Nor, pursuing the point, is there much in the outward life of a jumpers' airport that conveys an impression of youth taunted or oppressed. The artifacts of these scenes—white Alfa Romeos, black stretchpants, bleached goatees—are the standard stuff of modish hipster sybaritism, and, in and out of the competing season, the atmosphere is the opposite of taut. Of an ordinary Sunday morning, landing pits are rimmed with air mattresses on which visitors recline, scanning heaven for chutebursts, yellow, scarlet, green and gold, and picnicking comfortably on whiskey sours and lobster rolls; roundabout autumnal hillsides church-bells ring, but, as the smiling sons and daughters of Yale and Radcliffe suit up in their "Sport Sky Diving Sets" preparing for the joys of free fall, the public address system teases the day with the unurgent comping of Mr. Thelonious Monk, and the Puritan summons goes unheard. The tone of the foreign tents during the championship testified that this lazy-raffish, easy-riding youth style belongs to the whole jumping world, not simply to American chutists. (In part the testimony was a matter of unities of gesture and posture: the pretty blond *Fallschirmjägerin* from Austria took the sun in precisely the pose favored by the pretty blond *parashyutistka* from Russia; the playful Rumanians who raced about shooting water pistols at each other in parody of the "Duel in the Sky" slated the commercial gimmick in a spirit not wholly unlike that of the slogan chalked on the Aussies' tent—"The triangular chute is the best chute of all/ For a very fine fall." In part it was a matter of the universal sameness of the props of the suncult—lotion, dark glasses, bikinis, transistors and the like.) And the very internationality of the funhouse mode seemed to tell against the notion of the chutist as Harried Man.

When all this is said, though, it does remain to be added that tolerance of skydiving is something less than a rooted American tradition. The United States Government has not forbidden the game (a few European countries have done precisely that) but a number of governmental policies—for example, the ripping up of surplus chutes to prevent them from being sold for intentional parachuting—are regarded as essentially unfriendly since they drive up the cost of equipment. (Para-

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chutists are now conducting a Write-Your-Congressman campaign to alter such policies.) There are other signs—insurance restrictions, parental alarm, mass media tsk-tsking—that indicate that the sportjumper's chances of being left alone in the future are not improving. And, equally important as evidence that the unanxious outward style is misleading, the comments of reflective jumpers betray extreme wariness of disapproval, and an attachment to the pastime that is barely short of desperate.

The most obvious component of this attachment is, no doubt, the youthful need to reorganize relations between the self and otherness in a manner that will enhance the former and diminish the latter. Pressed for an account of his motives, the articulate jumper is likely to characterize the sport in terms suggesting that for him it amounts to a ritual of divestiture—a means of stripping off layers of institutional lies and myths that encrust the Individual. Often the truth of the impulse that first drives the jumper through the open door of the plane into hissing emptiness, in contempt of his most elemental fear, lies beyond expression—but for the present ecstasy words do exist. Free fall is free being; man diving is man alive; the ecstasy is that of nonconnection—the exhilaration of sinking the world to nothingness, or at least to stillness, and thereby creating the self as All.

The acceptance of the equation between silence and mastery is to a degree a product of indoctrination; the *Sport Parachuting Basic Handbook* insists on stillness as a key value. (". . . a peculiar silence settles around you . . . a total, strange silence. . . . The earth appears . . . more beautiful.") And, as already indicated, jumpers are often prodded out of their infatuation with formless freedom into contrived patterns of "flight." But, interestingly, again and again the competitors at Friendship Bowl expressed distaste for the restraining courses of loops and backloops through which they were forced to run. ("This formal thing," said Miss Judy Simpson, a young alternate on the United States Women's team, "it's all wrong. The whole idea is just scrambling out, getting *loose*. . . .") And winners, losers and tyros alike focused on the theme of self-liberation and enlargement. Mr. Arender likened his sensations to "what you feel when you're lying in a forest and you're all by yourself and there's only silence and the sun is going down. It's complete freedom in a world of nothingness." Mr. Bonno Wenkebach, a golden-skinned young dental surgeon from the Hague, likened his sensations to those of a polio victim entering the pool, feeling the weight of his braces leaving his limbs—a smooth assuaging flow of being. "You feel you are ceasing to be abnormal, tied up in irons," said Mr. Wenkebach. "You're not controlled any more. You're normal instead—that's the freedom of it. Freedom is what you *are*—no past, no indirectness, apparatus. . . . You are the master, nothing holds you that comes from anywhere except in yourself." As this competitor spoke, his less verbal colleagues listened with an approving soberness that itself attested to the depth of jumperdom's involvement in the experience described, as well as to the intensity of its determination to protect the sport from attack.

Appropriate historical and psychological contexts for interpretation of intensities such as these lie ready at hand. Lust for unconditionedness or divestiture can be regarded as one more symptom of what Mill long ago chose to describe as "the age of transition"—a moment in history when people reject public definitions of the good or the free or the normal, on the assumption that private judgment is "the ultimate refuge, the last and only resource of humanity." (Mill's attitude, as will be remembered, was stern: "Before I compliment a man or a generation upon having gotten rid of their prejudices, I require to know what they have substituted in lieu of them.") Or it can be placed as a phenomenon attending psychological evolution, and viewed with compassionate respect, after the manner of Erik Erikson. Skeptical of rationalizations that appear to endorse "any high-sounding self-delusion in youth, any self-indulgence masquerading as devotion, or any righteous excuse for blind destruction," Erikson is nevertheless impatient with idle moralizing

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against the adolescent flight from the given to the chosen. "From the middle of the second decade," he contends, "the capacity to think and the power to imagine reach beyond the persons and personalities in which youth can immerse itself so deeply," and as a consequence the young man not only wishes to be reborn "into a new reality," but to be "recognized as [an] individual who can be more than [he] seem[s] to be"—more than the conditioned, determined issue of history, family and core curriculum. The effort to win the recognition may from the start be marked by a deviancy that is visibly devoted and indignant "in the service of a wholeness that is to be restored," and therefore easy for perceptive adults to value. But in other instances the effort may seem irresponsible and reckless—and this in itself is not proof of self-delusion:

> . . . to some youths [Erikson writes] danger is a necessary ingredient of the experiment. Elemental things are dangerous; and if youth could not overcommit itself to danger, it could not commit itself to the survival of genuine values —one of the primary steering mechanisms of psychosocial evolution.

While considerations of the latter sort do much to illuminate the obscurer dimensions of the jumping game, only when they are coupled with scrutiny of the game's metaphorical content does light flow evenly on the skydiver as Symbol. Admittedly much of the content specified is homely and unexciting—the parallel, for example, between Youth (as a moment of suspension between the sanctuaries of childhood and adulthood) and Free Fall (as a moment of suspension between the sanctuaries of the plane and the canopy). Yet even this gains a measure of interest when pondered. Youth's problem, as well-informed thousands maintain, is that of determining when its suspension should end, when the claims of the world should be acknowledged. "The search for self which runs through the youth culture and the beat world," says Kenneth Keniston in a recent *Dædalus,* "is not the whole of life, and to continue it indefinitely means usually renouncing attainments which have been traditionally part of the definition of a man or woman: intimacy and love for others; personal creativity in work, ideas, and children; and that fullness and roundedness of life which is ideally the reward of old age." But while the intelligent young man can agree that to continue the search "indefinitely" is foolish, he cannot tell himself with much assurance that he knows when to cut it off. The society from whose imperfection and chaos he withdrew in dismay—perhaps in secondary school—is not markedly improved now that he is a B.A., or now that he has left the Army, or now that he has accepted a "meaningless" job drafting commercials or rockets: in none of these "forward steps" is there an imperative to *membership.* How and when will the imperative be felt? In what language will the summons from inward stillness to noisy human solidarity be uttered?

The absence of unambiguous answers is in a sense a piece of luck. Human survival may well depend in large part upon the talent (political only in area of operation) for suspension, and years of uncertainty about where to draw the line could help to develop that talent. Yet the uncertainty is a torment; youth's agony is altogether comparable to that of the analysand engaged in debate within himself as to whether the moment has arrived at which to say: I am healed, my analysis is over, I am no longer dependent. Such words are sweet to the imagination—but, to repeat, who knows exactly when to say them? Who knows exactly when his hour of independence is at hand? One way of mastering the problem is by relocating it in a manageable environment—and, oddly, this is what the chutists' game succeeds in doing. Trivial in appearance, the game is actually an experience of suspension framed as a closed unit with a perfectly calculated, perfectly expressible beginning, middle and end. At high altitude the skydiver leaps, within an instant he stabilizes his body, within twelve seconds the terms of his flight are fixed in numbers—one hundred and twenty miles per hour—by the counterforces of gravity and air resistance, and ever afterward his experience of freedom and nothingness, rolls, loops and scrambles, is measured and

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scheduled. The clocklike face fastened to the reserve chute at his waist computes his future, ticking, ticking, number after number naming the nearness of his approach to the Line beyond which lies a loss of bearing, a sprained or broken limb, a risk of "malfunction": forty, thirty, twenty seconds left, so much and no more, a baton is passed, hands touch in vacancy, a glance downward. . . .

Now! The hand grips and pulls—a shocking seizure, flapping aloft, shudder, cessation, gentling, oscillation: the return has "occurred." The descent that follows, under the canopy, is related to the dive as youth in its solitary splendid retreat is related to youth in community; it is an act of acceptance that closes the circle, reunites the jumper with nature and conditionedness, re-creates him as one among billions concerned about landing on their feet. Before the act takes place the jumper possesses a heightened reality, understands life as that which a man can take into his own hands and nature as that against which man can act (in certain circumstances) without being crushed; after it takes place the jumper is part of the given; insofar as the jumper connects the two "phases," he achieves an imitation in little of wholeness or roundedness. But the key to the experience *is* the sharpness of its outline. Once locked in the contained unit or cycle of freedom and conditionedness the chutist knows what cannot be known elsewhere, namely, when, why and how he must change his relation to otherness, where in freedom the real danger begins. That the diver's panegyric to the dive dwells only on liberty is, in short, deceptive: the prime infatuation, by a paradox, may well be with certitude itself.

The descent from here to homely allegory requires, as might be guessed, nothing more than a second glance at the chutists' bad gate. Look at us, look at us! the jumpers cried. We imitate life—the pattern of withdrawal and commitment; our leader has quit school to give himself to this task—at twenty-two he has to his credit six hundred and fifty imitations of The Real Thing! But the crowd of imperfect adults, caught in roiling Is-ness, turned away as though replying with the oldest and wannest words: Come down to earth, give over the metaphors and mockups: *Live*. Read thus, the allegory is heartening as well as homely, indeed a shade brighter than can be endured—but shadows can quickly be added. American skydancers, white, swan-arched, delicately hung in the unbearing air of the binocular lenses, failed to impress their fathers—but they did defeat their opponents: they are the champions, their proficiency is unmatched in the world. Which means? Into that bourne, down or up the cloud ladder, poets only go—but it may as well be noted, for hope's sake and ours, that the first relevant lyrical figure, occurring in a poem titled "On Youth," does (as the epigraph shows) damn Descent as Escape, and argue that in the clouds no problem is solved.

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REAPPRAISALS

The House of Mirth Revisited

DIANA TRILLING

It was in 1905, at the age of forty-three, that Edith Wharton published her remarkable novel of upper-class life in New York, *The House of Mirth,* the book that first proclaimed her literary stature. Even at the height of her fame and powers, Mrs. Wharton was acutely aware of the ever-widening distance between the world in which she had been reared and the general movement of American society as it was developing around her; her autobiography, *A Backward Glance,* which appeared in 1934, is a reminiscence deeply informed with melancholy recognition of the new conditions that barred her from full participation in the experience of her times. But the vast social changes Mrs. Wharton reported in her memoir were of course minor compared with the revolutionary alterations that have followed her death in 1937. Another quarter-century has delivered the mortal blow to the society in which she came of literary age, so that it is small wonder that her extraordinary work has passed into the archaeological shadows and that now, where she is known at all outside university English courses, it is merely, and pejoratively, as a society lady become society author. Today, if we attach meaning to her name it is likely to be only that which lies in what we are pleased to call her snobbery—her pride of birth, her delicate skirting of the common life, her addiction to an outmoded social protocol. Even the fresh critical light that belatedly revealed the fierce moral passion of Henry James has not yet penetrated the obscurity of his "Dearest Edith," his long-time friend and colleague. It still remains for criticism to show Mrs. Wharton in her proper place in the main stream of American literature.

Our picture of an embattled aristocrat cultivating her private garden behind a high wall of reticence and social fastidiousness is as little consistent, however, with Mrs. Wharton's work as the old genteel image of James was with his. Although there is little doubt that in her personal life Edith Wharton held fast to the privileges of her class, it is anything but the case that her creative powers were in the service of a social vision defined by the presuppositions of that class. The way of the artist is a strange one; in Mrs. Wharton's instance, the mysterious process by which a lifetime's deference to the imperatives of birth and social position was transformed into a driving literary concern with moral truth will perhaps never yield its whole explanation.

The proud descendant of Rhinelanders and Gallatins, who could recall but one person "in trade" who had ever been received in her home, who enclosed her calling card with the manuscripts of her first

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✪ DIANA TRILLING, a literary critic—she was fiction critic for the *Nation* from 1941 to 1949—also writes on political and sociological subjects for such magazines as *Partisan Review, Commentary,* the *New Leader* and *Encounter.* She has edited and introduced the *Selected Letters of D. H. Lawrence* and the Viking Portable *D. H. Lawrence.* This essay,* which is developed from Mrs. Trilling's 1947 *Harper's Bazaar* article of the same title, will be published shortly by Prentice-Hall in *Edith Wharton: A Collection of Critical Essays,* edited by Irving Howe.

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poems and who sadly lamented the passing of a day when the gentlemen of her acquaintance were available for social intercourse in the afternoon no less than in the evening hours because none of them worked; the writer living in France who would suffer no taint of the Left Bank and divided her residence between the rue de Varennes and an eighteenth-century chateau whose servants addressed each other as Monsieur and Madame—such a person would appear little suited to the freemasonry of literature. But this is precisely the point about Edith Wharton: her commitment to the democratic principle, if it can be said to have existed at all, existed only in a much transmogrified form. She was in social actuality the aristocrat that all literary artists are, and must be, in spirit, however strenuously they deny the social concretization of their personal "difference." She saw no reason to assimilate herself to the generality of mankind in order to validate her right to deal with man's fate in society; on the contrary, she assumed (or at least never questioned the fact) that to have one's own firm social base from which to examine man in society was to operate with a distinct advantage as an artist. And this was indeed how it worked out. Her social position enabled her not merely to bring the fact of high society into literature in all its concreteness and authenticity—this was the least of her achievements—but also made it uniquely possible for her to perceive the complex and subtle interplay between our personal destinies and the destiny foreordained by our particular social situation.

Fortified as she was in her own class, she knew the reality of class as no theoretical Marxist or social egalitarian can know it: not speculatively but in her bones. The captive, in her private life, of the values that accrue to a social group that is as firmly based in economic power as in lineage, she knew that the differences between rich and poor, between the socially protected and vulnerable, are more than mere forms or illusions, that they are the realest of realities. The insight into social truth that the novelist usually generates out of his own imagination Mrs. Wharton came to by, so to speak, social right. And she exercised it on behalf of a moral earnestness in no way the less reliable for being so entirely alien to the predatory world with which she had her closest association.

It often happens that the novelist who would appear to be least concerned with social renovation offers us the most cogent social criticism—Edith Wharton, in *The House of Mirth,* is a striking instance. But even today, in the sixties, we find this hard to believe. Although today we no longer apply the primitive criteria of the thirties, when literature waged class war and when the novel had to prove itself on the side of the dispossessed, the underprivileged, the proletariat, we still require of the novelist that he make clear his rejection of an unsatisfactory social organization by taking his stand well outside the class structure. We disallow fiction any view of society except as an abstract, inimical force. Any social particularization, even the recognition of advantages or disadvantages of birth and rearing, suggests to us an acceptance of the social order as it now exists. Marxism has lost its pervasive authority but we still make our obeisance to the classless state we may once have envisioned for ourselves by denying any present reality of class, any distinction of social topography or, certainly, any healthy conjunction between a writer's definition of his place in society and his moral vision.

Looked at in this light, *The House of Mirth* can hardly be expected to give satisfaction, for it is nothing if not a novel about social stratification and the consequences of breaking the taboos of class. In addition, its author is in important part identified with the distinctly upper-case Society that she is putting under such rigorous inspection—and this is not merely a matter of what we know of her life, it has also to do with where Mrs. Wharton locates herself in relation to the story she tells. Writing of Lily Bart, a beautiful young woman fated to destruction because she violated the laws of her social group, Mrs. Wharton never renounces her community with Lily's harsh judges, not even when she is exposing their most vicious hypocrisies. Her attack is al-

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ways within the family. *The House of Mirth* is nevertheless one of the most telling indictments of a social system based on the chance distribution of wealth, and therefore of social privilege, that has ever been put on paper. Indeed, what accounts for its extraordinary moral texture no less than its complex accuracy as a piece of social reporting is Mrs. Wharton's simultaneous acceptance of the social group into which she was born and her unflinching confrontation of the evils it perpetrates.

At the turn of the century, which is the period of *The House of Mirth,* Mrs. Wharton's social class had already begun to feel the assaults that in our own day have spelled the disappearance of its once unquestioned sense of power. Inherited wealth had begun to capitulate to new financial success; infiltrations from an uneasy European aristocracy and from the freer lands of the theater and art had already presaged our present-day international set. The solvent was at work within even the innermost circles of hereditary privilege, preparing the democratic integration and the mobility between classes with which we are now familiar.

One counts several carefully differentiated strata of New York Society in Mrs. Wharton's novel—the Proustian precision with which these dividing lines are drawn is not the least of the fascinations of the book. But it is not so much in their differences—the fact, say, that the Dorset-Trenor circle takes it for granted that ladies smoke and gamble, while the Gryce-Van Osburgh-Peniston circle countenances no such impropriety—as in their shared weaknesses that we read the impending collapse of the whole precious structure. If the conservatives of Society feel threatened by Dorsets and Trenors who no longer adhere to the rules by which they were reared, these "faster" members of their class are similarly aware of the new forces beating at *their* gate and the new values to which they are soon to be exposed; no segment of Society but knows it is imperiled by the large movement of social change. And although in isolated personal instances there may be a certain flexibility in response to the disturbance of old patterns, there is no class flexibility with which to accommodate a new order. Nor is there, of course, an adequate inflexibility or intransigence with which to resist it; there cannot be, unless this world of privilege marshal its strength to destroy the insurgent democratic horde—an act of militant counterassertion, actually of counterrevolution, which Society is already too decadent even to envision. What Mrs. Wharton is describing, in other words, is the inexorable process of history as it worked itself out in the America with which she was best acquainted.

An artist fiercely in possession of her own particular materials, Mrs. Wharton only once—and this once rather deplorably—undertakes to introduce into her novel the encroaching democratic mass that constitutes the palpable or, at any rate, the ultimate social enemy. This is when Lily Bart, nearing the climax of her short career, encounters a working-class girl whose path she had crossed in a vagrant moment of personal philanthropy. For the rest, Mrs. Wharton's representative of the new social dispensation is a Jew, a very rich Jew, Simon Rosedale, who is intent upon making a marriage that will fittingly ornament his enormous wealth and ensure him a place in Society. Not only the innermost circles but even the outlying sections of the old aristocratic world are at first resistant to Rosedale's intrusion; but they are unable to withstand the power of his money, and his urgency of personal ambition. This most foreign of Mrs. Wharton's characters at last penetrates the central strongholds; and if his worldly success coincides with the steady revelation of a far more feeling nature than showed in the days when he was failing so dismally in his social effort, we can take this as not the least pointed of Mrs. Wharton's comments on the connection between social realities and the life of the emotions. Obviously Mrs. Wharton is not saying that an achieved position in Society is the warrant of good feelings: her panorama of Lily's brutally shallow and callous friends argues quite the opposite. But she surely is saying that our gentler emotions have a hard time thriving where we lack a sense of our secure niche in the world, whatever it may be, or,

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as in Lily's case, without the nourishment of money.

The historical moment, then, of *The House of Mirth* is the moment when a Jew —and a self-made Jew at that, uncouth and charmless, whose deviations from accepted deportment are as conspicuous as his wealth and as grating on the sensitive nerve of Society—can aspire to associate on equal terms with the old Hudson Valley families. But this is still the moment when the old social monarchs, aware that a new dynasty of wealth storms the inherited realm, cling most tenaciously to their rights of blood; the struggle is the fiercer because so futile. Through most of *The House of Mirth* Rosedale takes insult to a degree that would flatten any except a man of iron will—except a man, that is, whose personal will was synonymous with the will of history. His strength of endurance lies in his awareness that it is only so long as the old fortunes hold out that the old families can maintain their prestige and power, and in his sure knowledge that his own shrewd speculations on Wall Street are in the process of blasting their hereditary fortress.

It is into this world of wealth and privilege, much shaken but still unyielding, that Mrs. Wharton's heroine has been born just short of thirty years before the novel opens. Living wildly beyond their limited means, Lily Bart's parents had never had more than a perilous foothold in New York Society; now they are dead, bankrupt and therefore forgotten, and they have left their daughter to the half-hearted care of a widowed aunt, Mrs. Peniston, a cold, self-centered bastion of respectability. Determined to survive where her parents had perished, Lily has a single course open to her: she must make the marriage for which she has been groomed and for which she is so well qualified by her beauty and charm. But even as the story opens there is the premonition of disaster. Lily is already twenty-nine, and has missed her best chances. She has become the perennial guest of wealth, moving from one great country house to another, dutifully smoothing her way with small services to her busy hostesses. At heart she is unamenable to the social group in which she seeks establishment; she zigzags disastrously between the most gifted conformity to the behavior required of a young woman in search of a rich, well-placed husband, and sudden impulses that run dangerously counter to the commands of practical reason.

Although it is in her departures from convention that Lily reveals her natural superiority to her social group, she lacks the money and family backing to support her divergence, and she also lacks the harsh consistency without which rebellion is exposed as a weakness. In a predatory world, to give the least sign of faltering is to invite annihilation, and we watch Lily move to her downfall. When she is pressed with debts she allows Gus Trenor, the husband of her closest friend, to make investments for her; it is his own money Trenor advances, and Lily is deeply compromised. She crosses the amatory field of the frenetic Mrs. Dorset, provoking that powerful lady's hostility. In crucial moments of her marital campaigns she offends her few remaining prospects by neglecting them in favor of Lawrence Selden, a bachelor of only modest means. Blundering and miscalculating but constantly growing in moral stature, Lily meets her inevitable end —poverty, ostracism by relatives and friends, death.

It is clear that what Mrs. Wharton is captured by in Lily Bart is her ambiguity of purpose, the conflict between her practical good sense and the pull of spirit. And what makes Lily a heroine for the reader—one of the greatly appealing heroines of fiction, worthy of association with Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina—is the ultimate triumph of spirit over good sense, even though the transcendance guarantees her destruction. Were Lily's spirit more in tune with her society, the novel might have ended with her practical victory over the poor souls who surround her, but the achievement would make her no better a creation than they. On the other hand, it is a mistake to think of Lily as Mrs. Wharton's model of virtuousness. She is "pure" neither in her own nor in her author's eyes. The poignancy of her fate lies in her doomed struggle to subdue that part of her own

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nature that is no better than her culture. Where a less pliant imagination than Mrs. Wharton's would surely have conceived Lily's conflict with her world as the battle between Innocence (Lily) and Experience (Society), Mrs. Wharton has the courage to recognize the extent to which Lily herself has been tainted by her environment.

One of the subtler themes of *The House of Mirth* is the parallel Mrs. Wharton traces between Lily's defeat and the inevitable defeat of art in a crass materialistic culture. It is not only that Lily herself possesses the quality of a fine work of art, although it is in fact just this that attracts Rosedale to her, so that we can conjecture that if he applies as good taste to the pictures he will soon buy, his collection will be a notable one. It is also that Lily wants for herself what art wants for all of us. For Mrs. Wharton's heroine, wealth is much more than a matter of worldly security—and this despite her luxurious tastes whose indulgence plays such a large part in her undoing. It is the means for living a life of harmony and grace, free of the dingy and sordid: Mrs. Wharton repeatedly uses these two words to describe an existence where there is insufficient money to enhance one's own potentialities or to disguise the less lovely aspects of life. That the same small segment of society that is lucky enough to have the means for making life into a thing of beauty should be as lacking in virtue and generosity, as lacking, actually, in the instinct to art, as Lily's friends are is a major irony of her story. With the considerable bitterness of her intimate experience of the spiritual desolation of Society, Mrs. Wharton assures us that the rich are morally unworthy of the beauty they can afford, that at heart they are all of them of a piece with Mrs. Peniston, whose expensive dismal furniture is so accurate a reflection of her charmlessness and such an offense to her niece. Whatever one's wealth, one cannot buy spiritual grace; nor, by extension, can art redeem a callous humanity. In an extraordinary scene, in which some newcomers to Society herald their arrival with a lavish party, the climax of which is a series of *tableaux vivants* reproducing old masterpieces of painting—Goya, Titian, Veronese, Watteau—Mrs. Wharton puts Lily in the scant draperies of Reynolds's Mrs. Lloyd and she comments: "It was as though she had stepped, not out of, but into Reynolds's canvas, banishing the phantom of his dead beauty by the beams of her living grace." To Lawrence Selden, Lily's male counterpart in delicacy and imaginativeness, the apparition catches "for a moment a note of that eternal harmony of which her beauty was a part," but for Ned Alstyne, spokesman for a decadent patriciate, Lily's appearance is the occasion for the only connoisseurship of which his culture is capable: "Deuced bold thing to show herself in that get-up; but, gad, there isn't a break in the lines anywhere, and I suppose she wanted us to know it!" Instead of the self-confirming and ungenerous in her spectators being outweighed by an experience of the lovely and eternal, the balance has gone the other way. Lily's "predominance of personality" (as Mrs. Wharton phrases it) can speak only to what is small-minded in her audience.

Lily's sensibility, her quick eager responsiveness to beauty, has nowhere to exercise itself except in this rich vulgar world to which she has been born. Even Nature, always present where there is the money to buy it, turns out to be only another propitious setting for the advancement of her marital ambitions rather than the ambience for finer feelings than are readily accommodated in dining salons and grand ballrooms; in an encounter with Selden, on a country walk, the tender spell that is put upon the two of them by the glimmer and fragrance of the Hudson Valley landscape is drastically interrupted by Lily's recollection that she must not be missing from the house when the Gryce heir, her current "opportunity," returns to it. As for religion, which in an earlier culture would have been the most promising source of compensation for Lily's deprivations of spiritual sustenance, it has as completely ceased to exist for a person of her imaginativeness as for her crass companions. Young Gryce does indeed go to church, but it is made clear to us that his ritual obedience to the maternal injunction is not to be separated

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from his cautiousness against chills and tobacco. In this world, piety is a comic attribute and true devoutness unthinkable; there is but one God, Mammon. *The House of Mirth* is always and passionately a money story. It is money that rules where God, love, charity or even force of character or distinction of personality might once have ruled. It is money that puts the wrong persons in power and that robs Lily of the ability to fulfill her potentialities which are so much larger than theirs. It is money that, in killing a Lily Bart, announces its miserable triumph over the human spirit.

Because Lily Bart's story is so much a money story and Lily is herself so consistently at the mercy of her economic disadvantage, one might expect Mrs. Wharton to pass some measure of adverse judgment upon her heroine's failure of sympathy for a class even less privileged than her own. For instance, in Lily's rare excursion into philanthropy the emotions she displays can scarcely be counted to her credit: Selden's cousin, Gerty Farish, is a young woman who has accepted both poverty and spinsterhood in order to pursue a life of good works, and when Lily visits the working-girls' club which is Gerty's particular vocation, she is all gracious condescension; like a queen among her subjects, she allows the girls to look upon her beauty so that their own drab lives may be irradiated. But although vis à vis Gerty's deep-rooted devotion to her girls, Lily's shallow pleasure in her ability to bring enchantment into a dark corner of life is not calculated to endear her to us, long before this episode, at the very start of the novel, the difference between Gerty and Lily has been precisely drawn in Lily's favor. Selden and Lily have been speaking of his cousin, and Lily, having alluded to the terms of Gerty's life—besides being unmarriageable, Gerty has "a horrid little place, and no maid, and such queer things to eat. Her cook does the washing and the food tastes of soap"—sums up the matter: "We're so different, you know: she likes being good, and I like being happy." As between a life of dingy virtue and a life of charm and happiness, or at least the intent of happiness, there is no question of how the artist in Mrs. Wharton responds. Nor is the option for grace a mitigation of her morality. Happiness is the moral option, the sole moral option available to a person of sensibility like Lily and like her author, and, indeed, the choice is echoed in the response of all the sympathetic characters in the story. At the end of the novel, when Lily is ill and desperate, she accidentally runs into Nettie, one of the girls she had smiled upon so enchantingly at Gerty's club, and we learn from the girl's own lips the mysterious uplifting effect Lily's presence had had upon her in a moment of despair. Lily's personal sweetness and the illumination of a spirit that attaches itself to the quest for beauty may have been lost upon the people of established power. But they have never finally failed to communicate themselves to Nettie, to Gerty Farish, to Selden, even to Simon Rosedale—to all the persons in the book who themselves still seek and grow.

Among these few humans in Mrs. Wharton's novel none is more congenial than Lawrence Selden, the bachelor lawyer who comes to be Lily's conscience as well as her love. While it no doubt stretches things to see in Selden a conscious portrait of Henry James, the connection is perhaps more intimate than Mrs. Wharton could comfortably recognize. True, Selden is a bachelor, not a celibate; he has had an affair with the promiscuous Mrs. Dorset and we are allowed to surmise an extended series of sexual alliances that have similarly left him free of significant emotional entanglement. This sexual disparity aside, together with the fact that Selden shows no impulse to expatriation, there is nevertheless much to remind us of James in Selden's moral elevation and in the inviolability with which he inhabits an insensible world, as well as in his eager appreciation of beauty and his subtle wit. The intellectual of *The House of Mirth* and, in his quality of spirit, as much an "artist" as Lily, Selden, with his decent bachelor quarters, his good worn rugs and books and his excellent modest teas, is as close to a bohemian as Mrs. Wharton could manage. He cogently argues the thesis that is everywhere implied in Mrs. Wharton's novel, and made explicit in her

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own choice of a manner of life, that mind and grace of spirit reach their best flower in a well-ordered society, sheltered against the rude winds that blow through a more open world.

Selden is unmarried not because of any insufficient wish for final commitment to a woman. The fact that he is a man of strong passions, if we had ever doubted it, is unmistakable in his response to Lily's appearance in the *tableau vivant*. It is by no accident that Mrs. Wharton has cast Lily in a painting of Reynolds, with whose treatise on the Grand Style she was bound to be familiar. While the idiom of her period imposes the expectable restraints on sexual expression, her description of Lily's beauty of body revealed through thin classical draperies carries a remarkable erotic charge, and we come to perceive, through Mrs. Wharton's manifest pleasure in Lily's pagan sensuality and the approval his author gives to Selden for his warm reception of the scene, that in obeying the injunction of her period against sexual overtness in her fiction Mrs. Wharton is in no way blinding herself to sexual reality. On the contrary, she suggests a radical connection between sensuality and elegance, between sexuality and sensibility. If the well-ordered, the harmonious, the grand and the classical announces itself in grace and high-mindedness, it is also the style that best serves our biological needs. Lily and Selden are designed for each other not merely in spirit but in body.

But Selden cannot take what he wants and should have, and this is almost as much the tragedy of *The House of Mirth* as Lily Bart's social victimization. His passions are strong but blocked—or so we would put it today; they are unavailable to him except as a kind of promissory note on a beneficence to which he lacks access. Throughout the story Selden moves toward Lily from behind a cruel shield of emotional self-protection, always afraid to give over to the commanding impulse, always defended against the very involvement he could most wish for himself. Incapable of the spontaneous gift of his love, of the instinctual acceptance that would restore Lily's faith in herself, he manages only to reinforce her crippling scruples without ever proposing a feasible alternative to a life that uniquely punishes the weakly conscientious.

Regarding Lily as an unengaged instance of beauty, Selden can be fundamentally untroubled, and even charmed, by her follies and trivialities. He is far too genuinely sophisticated to require that art be validated by solemnity. But so soon as he would make her the object of emotions that might shake his own tidy system of feelings or threaten his isolate pride, his first and victorious impulse is retreat. There is the one occasion, of course, when Lily herself must take responsibility for his quick defensiveness—when Selden has made his first groping offer of love and Lily interrupts him to dash home to Gryce. Although at this point in the novel the reader is already aware that Lily's conduct is not quite so grim as it looks and that she just cannot believe that the "real" world of sound marriages and even sounder bank accounts has room in it for the happiness she experiences in Selden's company, there is no reason for Selden himself to take her flight as anything except a gross rejection. But the story goes on and provides Selden, too, with sufficient opportunity to learn what we have always known of Lily, that she is his for the firm asking, or taking. He nevertheless continues aloof and suspicious, and eventually he deserts her quite as conspicuously as her other old friends do; the censorious judgment of the world serves the unconsciously welcome function of protecting him against his desires. Only when Lily is vindicated in and by death—on her desk is her check to Trenor in full payment of the money Trenor had advanced her—can the emotions that have been locked in Selden be released. Society turns out, that is, to be the counterpart, perhaps the sum, of the prohibitions that have always paralyzed his feelings. It is finally as triumphant over Selden as over Lily Bart. In yielding to the social authority, Selden has denied life itself, his own no less than Lily's.

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another of its all-too-convincing demonstrations of the toll society exacts in defeated feeling. In a novel contrived like a poem, with never a line but has been framed for its precise use in the tragic pattern of the story, never an excessive or ill-considered phrase, we particularly come to notice Mrs. Wharton's reiteration of words that, on the one hand, suggest light—glow, glimmer, radiance, illumination, sun, shimmer—and, on the other, evoke darkness—shadow, dim, dingy, dreary, dull. Except for *Othello,* or perhaps *Romeo and Juliet,* one can think of no other work of the literary imagination that makes this much verbal play between the images of night and day.

"Dramatize, dramatize!" James exhorted himself, and whether in emulation of the master or because of her own commitment to the formal structure of the novel, Mrs. Wharton sees to it that her story proceeds by *happenings.* In *The House of Mirth,* however, the most crucial happenings turn out to be scarcely more than accidents, or even coincidences. From the start of the book, in which Lily, whiling away time before she takes a train at Grand Central Station, drops in at Selden's bachelor quarters for an innocent cup of tea and is seen not merely by Rosedale, who turns out to own the building, but also by a charwoman who will later abstract Mrs. Dorset's love letters from Selden's trashbasket and offer them to Lily for blackmail purposes, the poor girl can seem to take no step but is witnessed by the persons who will put it to worst use —to the point where we feel of the furies who pursue her that they are really only small-town gossips with nothing better to do than lay nasty little traps for their victim and then sit by to watch her fall into them. But then we realize that this is the nature of Mrs. Wharton's, and Lily's, society; their New York is very much a small town where everyone knows everyone else and where the boundaries even upon one's physical movements are rigidly prescribed. Mrs. Peniston, after all, can sit at her window and be as well-informed of the comings and goings of her acquaintances as if she were still young and active. If, in the novel as we know it today, the malign power of society announces itself in our sense of anonymity and of our being overwhelmed by the vast and remote, for Lily Bart it lies in her relentless coercion by the familiar—in her inability to evade the eyes of her world and lose herself in the crowd.

And yet the restrictions of class that are so binding on Lily do not rob her story of wider reference, even to ourselves who are removed from her by such radical social change. Her station in life serves the classic device of presenting us with a common human tragedy in a situation where, because the stakes are unusually high and the fall from glory very steep, the personal defeat has a special poignancy. In much the same way that, without in the least blinding ourselves to the inequities, absurdities and even horrors of Lily Bart's world, we can envy a society as neatly encompassable as this, just so we ignore the incongruities between Lily's situation and ours to discover our own tragic fate in her story. A class novel if ever there was one, *The House of Mirth* wholly transcends the limited social environment with which it is immediately concerned, and perhaps the more successfully because Mrs. Wharton has such a definite social axis around which she organizes her moral perceptions.

On the other hand, few novels of our century or even of a more distant time are as archaic as *The House of Mirth* as a record of the conventions. In Lily's entire dependence on the good opinion of her small segment of society, her naked vulnerability to gossip, her incapacity to make a life for herself or even to stay physically alive except within this restricted world and on its strict terms, we have the data of a way of life, particularly of female life, that is bound to confound the modern reader. Today, when we are more alert than we ever have been to the economic determination of whatever kind of power, we have no trouble understanding that social privilege must be paid for in hard cash. This is very different, however, from inhabiting a society where the right even to earn a living is a social privilege and where ostracism from the class of one's birth is the equivalent of a death sentence.

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Early in the novel Lily talks with Selden about poverty; the unreality of her approach to the unhappy subject is revealed in her jesting remark that she has no fear of being poor because she knows how to trim her own hats. It is as unimaginable to her that she will ever have to support herself as that a woman of her class should travel without a maid, so that when, all incredibly, such a moment arrives and she discovers that her aptitude in millinery is something less than a professional talent, she receives the blow with considerable dryness: never having seriously supposed she could move out of her class nor recognized even a human connection with the working class, the failure to qualify for it is not a humiliation; it is just another fatality, another link in the chain of error that has led her to her present plight. Nor is the reader surprised that Mrs. Wharton cannot contrive a more suitable form of employment for Lily—as, say, a governess or companion. Where, as for Lily Bart, society poses but a single alternative to a woman, to live by its laws or die by its laws, any ingenuity that would wish to triumph over the preordained destiny is at best merely a delaying tactic. Like the old Bolshevik who confesses to uncommitted crimes in attestation of the superior moral authority of the state, Lily affirms the absolute power of society over the life of the individual by her demonstration that she is finally incapable of effective action on her own behalf.

The double moral standard, one for the married woman and another for the unmarried, that supports this authoritarian social structure is not an unfamiliar one; we know it from traditional European societies in which a very wide moral latitude is permitted a married woman so long as she has the protection of her husband's name and bank account but where the woman who has not yet reached this economic sanctuary must guard against the slightest misstep. We readily recognize the old economic motive at work in the fact that the very people who are most fierce in condemnation of Lily because she visits Selden or Trenor in compromising circumstances, or because she takes money from the husband of her best friend, can accept unruffled Mrs. Dorset's extramarital excursions or Mrs. Fisher's "loans" from the gentlemen of her acquaintance. But the petty vindictiveness that Mrs. Wharton's matrons direct upon Lily Bart suggests a qualitative difference between the conduct of upper-class Europeans and upper-class Americans in analogous situations of social dissidence. There is little of the high-handedness of an established aristocracy but much of the spitefulness of the petty bourgeoisie in Mrs. Dorset's retaliations against Lily or in the speed with which all the women of her circle run to cover once Lily falls out of favor with its leaders. And Trenor's easy talk about his benefactions to Lily and the righteous indifference with which he meets the ruin of her reputation scarcely describe a gentleman. It necessarily occurs to us that only a class that has never been certain of its stability or distinction could be this meanly self-protective, and that Mrs. Wharton's decision to ally herself with this section of society was bound, finally, to bring her as much suffering as satisfaction.

The bitterness of *The House of Mirth*, beneath its well-bred surface, is indeed extreme. One has the sense that Mrs. Wharton concentrated in the story of Lily Bart the accumulated angers of her lifetime up to that point—and there would be, we know, still more bitterness to come, and still more novels in which to tell it out. That Mrs. Wharton was able to discipline herself as rigorously as she did, so that the force of her personal feelings never violated her cool imagination of what the novel should be, does great credit to her character. But no doubt it does much to explain the distance at which she has been kept by the modern public.

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A Look Around . . . . . .

"...this creature...cannot look very lovely"

PAUL A. ZAHL

I was stopping in a small town on the coast of north Queensland. My hotel room on the second floor led onto an open veranda from where one morning, as I sat having coffee, my eyes fell upon what appeared to be a black rag hanging from a power line half a block down the street. For no particular reason it held my attention, and after breakfast I strolled over for a closer look. A suffused sun and an atmosphere softly warm and humid heightened the gaudy effect of poincianas in bloom along the sidewalk.

Standing on the curb and looking up, I saw the "black rag" to be an enormous bat, quite dead, with knotty little feet clinging to the wire as if to a branch. The body swayed gently in the breeze and its membranous wings sagged pitiably. The creature's vulpine muzzle and tapered ears identified it at once as a "flying fox," whose genus *Pteropus* ranges widely over the Eastern tropics. The unfortunate animal had obviously blundered into or sought a perch on the wire the night before, and in maneuvering had brushed one of its wings against a parallel line, instantly receiving a lethal surge of short-circuited current.

Such great fruit bats are actually members of the zoological suborder Megachiroptera, some of which have wings more than five feet from tip to tip. Although they are virtuously vegetarian, their simulation in a Hollywood horror movie invariably draws shrieks from the adolescents. Smaller species, the Microchiroptera, have always been the hallmark of witches and a favorite ingredient of magical stews.

Each morning during my five-day sojourn in that Queensland town, I passed near the site of the electrocution, noticing the still-clinging cadaver, which no one bothered to remove. My curiosity grew with each encounter. Where had it come from? What had it looked like, sweeping through the night with those great pinions splayed and flapping? An Aussie friend told me that flying foxes by the hundreds of thousands congregated by day in areas often vast and usually swampy; "camps," he called them. There was a big one, he said, on the outskirts of a town an hour's drive up the coast. He gave me directions, and I set out next day in a rented car.

Vital plexus of the up-coast village turned out to be the general store, where I made inquiry as to the camp's specific location. The proprietor, after lacing out all fruit bats as dirty thieving rascals, became very friendly and, leaving the store unattended, led me down a dusty path that ran alongside a nearby railroad track. A fifteen-minute walk, during which the track veered off, the path diffused and the ground grew squashy, brought us to the edge of an

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✪ PAUL A. ZAHL's article, "What Are the Wild Waves Saying?" appeared in the Autumn, 1962, SCHOLAR. Mr. Zahl is the National Geographic Society's senior editor for the natural sciences.

The title of the present article is a quotation from John Swan's *Speculum Mundi* (Cambridge, England, 1635): ". . . she creeps with her wings, is without feathers, and flyeth with a kinde of skin, as bees and flies do; excepting that the Bats wing hath a farre thicker and stronger skin. And this creature thus mungrell-like, cannot look very lovely."

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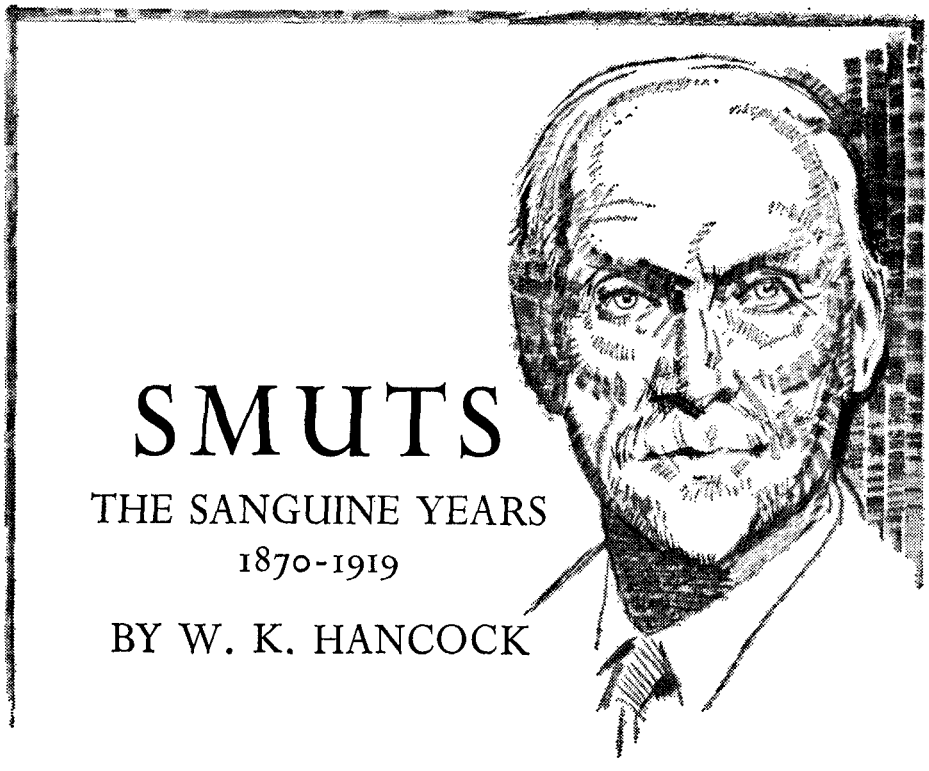

SMUTS

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enormous mangrove swamp, from whose wild twisting interior came a sustained chorus of high-pitched cries, whimpers, chatters and even screams.

"Bloody smart, these foxes," said my friend. "They camp in the middle where even a man with a bulldozer on pontoons couldn't get at them. If they lived along the edge, every fruit grower in Queensland would be here with blood in his eye, and his shotgun eating shells."

Usual fare for the literally millions of flying foxes inhabiting east and northeastern Australia is ripe mangoes and nectar-laden eucalyptus blooms. But farmers are well aware that when these are in short supply, the frugivorous pests will turn to domestic pawpaws, apples, peaches, pears, figs and the like. Fortunately, the modern horticultural practice of taking in the harvest early, before it becomes sweet and tempting, has to a degree out-foxed the foxes and forced them to depend mainly, as in the days before the human invasion, on wild fruit and blossoms. In quest of these, the bats may migrate en masse hundreds of miles, deserting one location for another. Some camps, on the other hand, have been known to remain anchored for as long as fifty years, their successive generations foraging widely in all directions. Despite attempts to shoot them out, to poison them or even to destroy their camps with flame throwers, the fruit bats of Australia thrive as one of the more stable elements of the faunal population.

"I'd say fifty thousand here," remarked my friend, although we could not see a single one. His added comment, "they must be sleeping," called for a quick explanation in view of all that chatter. Well, he said, they used the day hours also to gossip, squabble, mate, scold at their young, scratch parasites and wing-fan themselves if the day were warm. "At dusk, when they take off for the night, that's the time to see them," my guide advised.

I took that counsel, engaging a room in a hillside home across the valley from where, although at some distance, a more commanding view could be had of the swamp.

As dusk fell, my binoculars obtruded on a countless multitude of dark restless shapes hanging from denuded branches deep in the mangrove. There was a good deal of nervous action—wings knifing open and shut, bodies repositioning, crowding. Activity increased as dusk deepened, and so did those eerie, edgy shrieks and screeches that now assailed my ears from all the way across the valley. The sound surged as the bats began to take off, first a few, then small groups, followed by an ever-growing column of flyers that soon extended like a swath of wind-flattened black smoke down the darkening valley, drawn by the perfume of ripening fruits and blossoms in every orchard, backyard and jungled hillside within flight range. It was a wild sight—without binoculars, just a disturbed beehive; with 12X magnification, something straight out of the underworld.

Bats, as one of three vertebrate groups surpassing both Dædalus and the Wright Brothers, were well-developed as far back as the Eocene, when human ancestry was still in the trees. Before them came the pterosaurs, flying reptiles whose membranous wings stretched from the body to an awkwardly elongated fifth forelimb digit. Birds, arising as they did from reptiles, elaborated on this, modifying all the digits and introducing the miracle of feathers. Around that same time, also experimenting with flight, were certain small shrew-like mammals, which in another line of descent ancestored lemurs, apes and man. Four digits of each hand became lengthened; stretching over this framework was the same sort of skin webbing used by the early reptiles. The thumb, and in some species also the second digit, retained a talon for clutching and climbing, while certain physiological adjustments were made internally to allow for an upside-down mode of life.

Today the products of these innovations thrive in the form of several hundred bat species running the gamut from fruit, insect and even fish eaters to blood lappers; from midgets the size of hummingbirds to monsters with five-foot wingspreads. The latter are limited to the Old-World tropics, the odious vampires to the warm humid latitudes of the New World. Interesting it

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is that, while feathered wings are mainly instruments of the day, webbed wings hold dominion over the night. One explanation points to the radar-like ultrasonic ranging system possessed by many bats which enables them to fly "blind." Our large fruit eaters, on the other hand, are not so endowed and, like the birds, must find their way by means of the conventional, although no doubt sharpened, senses.

The last of the camp's streaming cohorts now fused with the growing darkness, and the only sound on the night air was the shrill tuning of insects. I wondered how bats ever got to be associated in the popular mind with matters occult and evil, the great majority of species being harmless to man and, in fact, as avid consumers of insects, having considerable economic value. It was no doubt their habitual presence in dark places and their generally silent and wraith-like flight that encouraged the connotation of mystery. Ancient Mayas, observing the regular flight of bats into and out of dark caverns, assumed they guarded access to the interior of the earth, the kingdom of darkness and death. In most regions and in divers cultures and ages, the bodies or various organs of bats have figured in all forms of psychomancy. An old Egyptian conjuration includes "by the blood of a black bat;" our own colloquium, "like a bat out of hell." Many an early medical prescription specifies bats, or portions thereof, as important components; for example, "Bat's Balsam," useful in treating hypochondria, contained suckling whelps, earthworms, adders, hog's grease, the marrow of a stag, the thigh bone of an ox—and, of course, bats. With the "wool of bat and the tongue of dog" stewing in their magic pot, the witches of Macbeth support the ancient fiction. Only the Chinese hold the bat in high esteem, regarding him as a harbinger of happiness and good luck.

Armored in high boots, I was down at the tracks next day, aiming to penetrate at least the fringes of the mangrove, and before long I was shin-deep in watery muck, surrounded by a tight mesh of mangrove roots and loops with which a barbwire entanglement would have been about on a par, although here were no snipers or menace of machine-gun and mortar fire. On the other hand, I had been warned by my friend at the store of tree-climbing snakes, crocodiles and large goanna lizards—all camp-following bat predators. Several times I seemed only yards from my quarry, but in each instance when I got to the likely source of the cries and shrieks, I found only barren branches aswarm with flies and heavy with the smell of putrefaction. What finally broke my spirit was violent itching, as parasitic mites left behind by the bats sought the warmth and sustenance of my skin as an agreeable substitute.

I had just begun a sloshing exit when a single gunshot rang from somewhere outside the swamp—perhaps only a boy hunting rabbits—but still loud enough to cause havoc among the bats. The sky above me was immediately dark gray with wheeling bat flesh, and I felt trapped as though in a cellar with express trains thundering overhead. But my own qualm—quite unfounded in view of the bats' essential harmlessness—was nothing to the mass fright of the foxes. Pandemonium lasted no more than perhaps fifteen seconds, then diminished as the screaming horde settled back into the mangrove. My world was again blue-skied, although still haunted by the renewed chatter of the roosting bats, once more well hidden. I heard a splash nearby and, mindful of crocodiles, made steady tracks for dry land.

But I returned next day, approaching the swamp from another and what appeared to be a less tangled flank, only to be halted again by mire and mangrove and their attendant plagues. Not a single hanging bat did I get close to. The creatures were competently living up to their foxy reputation.

On Thursday Island off the northeast tip of the Australian continent, five hundred miles deeper into the Capricorn tropics, I resumed my romance with fruit bats. The economic mainstays of "T. I." are pearl and trochus shell and, to a limited extent, gem pearls, although at the time of my visit things were not especially booming, what with the competitive dominance of Japan's cultivated product and the inroads made on the button industry by plastics.

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Nonetheless, crews of fuzzy-haired natives from the nearby Murray Islands kept a fleet of luggers going, and the few whites there who ran the industry seemed at least to make ends meet.

Among the latter was a pleasant chap whom I shall call Edmund. His room was next to mine in the local hostel, and one evening as we sat having a drink on the porch, the conversation got around to bats, and I told of my difficulties in the Queensland camp. Ed seemed to imply that to get next to a flying fox was not such a feat after all, and I was about to ask whether he knew of some local camp to which entrance was feasible, when we heard the swish-swish of membranous wings somewhere in the darkness above. Then it stopped and we were distinctly aware of rasping, crunching and chewing high in a mango tree that draped the porch. Ed threw me a conspiratorial look and hurriedly excused himself on some mysterious pretext, leaving me to study the tree in hopes of getting a glimpse of the marauder in action.

All at once there was the heavy kerplunk of a mango on the ground only inches from me. I ducked away, lest others follow, then peered cautiously upward. Thanks to the rays of a nearby porch light, I immediately espied the culprit—one of my fine caped friends, of course, hanging there upside down, rasping away now at another mango. He was quite aware of my presence, and eyed me sharply.

I picked up the half-squashed projectile and examined the tooth marks on its ripe orangy surface, wondering whether its landing so close had been mere coincidence, when the burst of a shotgun no more than twenty feet away blasted my ears. Out of the foliage, tumbling from branch to branch and finally striking the ground with a thud, came the bat, dead as a doornail. A jubilant Ed reappeared, ejecting the shell from his gun and blowing the barrel clear of smoke. "Some places on the mainland pay a bounty for these," he said, "but not here. Good riddance all the same—and you've got what you wanted."

There, blood oozing from its nostrils, was a duplicate of the sharp little fox face I had seen hanging from that stiffened corpse on the power line. I felt uncomfortable, even guilty. In that brief visual encounter a moment before, the bat's keen bright eyes, looking into mine, had reflected the vague propinquity one sometimes fancies in the eyes of a favorite cat or dog. Pest or not, this marvelous invention of nature should still have been up there in the tree eating mangoes and dropping them wherever it chose.

Ed picked up the carcass, a female, and spread wide the parchment-like, now shot-perforated wings—a bit over three feet they measured from tip to tip. The body was warm as a kitten's as I took it and examined the clutching feet and the two sharp talons on the upper edge of each wing. Bats of this size cannot walk or take off except from a height. If for some reason grounded, they must flop and stumble until reaching a tree trunk, climbing it until high enough for an air-catching plunge. The shriveled state of a tender little nipple under each armpit suggested that this mother's babe must have been a weanling, left back at the camp. Offspring, most often single but sometimes twins, are suckled for about four months, during which they are regular passengers on the nightly foraging trips. In flight they cling close to the mother's skin and fur, mouth usually nailed to one of her teats; at camp they snuggle within the protective security of the mother's closely shrouding pinions. I spread open the jaws for a look at the dentition: the molars had flattened crowns for crushing fruit tissue, of which the juice is swallowed and the pulp rejected. The creature had a repulsive odor, and I could scarcely put myself in the place of mainland aboriginals who are said to fancy the meat.

Why creation ever included so grisly a giant among its bats is hard to imagine. Or is the exoneration really so simple, and I suspect it might well be, as to be suggested by the rather unfashionable inkling that any living thing is its own justification? Overtly the bat's weird form and mode of life serve biological diversity, that touchstone of evolution, which has led, via adaptive radiation, to the competitive

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filling of the planet's countless environmental niches. Yet, in actual fact, bats perfected the structural basis of their flight more than fifty million years ago and, according to the paleontological record, have since undergone relatively few fundamental alterations. Back in the dawn of Eocene time, they won their winged hands, along with their nocturnal and dietary habits, and, for reasons we can only guess at, clung to the niche so dictated. Once an evolving line achieves a comfortable ecological billet that does not veer radically or become threatened by, say, the entry of a seriously competing group, the pressure for change is reduced. To be sure, mutations do continue to occur, but under these circumstances they serve only for minor modifications. It is possible that major elements of the bat's setting, such as darkness, membranous flight, fruit, insects and, in the case of vampires, blood, have been from the beginning relatively stable, thus providing little incentive for splinter groups to venture forth from the original domain. According to a classical view, evolution in the organic world ensues mainly through the play of a nonstatic environment on a mutating and inherently competing population. (It seems hardly singular to suggest that somewhat the same sort of interplay may occur in the world of concepts, with new ideas serving the role of mutations.)

Flying northwestward from Australia to Ceylon, I remained within the range of the genus *Pteropus*. Visiting the town of Kandy in the Island's cool up-country, I strolled out one night when the moon was full and the air sweet with frangipani and burning coconut husks. Dark-skinned women in brilliant saris and men in long white sarongs moved toward the Temple, in whose inner sanctum a tooth of the Lord Buddha is said to repose. They carried small paper cornucopias of plumeria petals or cardboard platters of champac blooms, for Buddhism relies heavily on flowers in its symbolism. These fragrant offerings, transient as life itself, would be placed at the feet of one of the images in the Temple, not as sacrifices or gifts but merely as gentle tokens of gratitude to him who twenty-five hundred years earlier presented this sector of mankind with a system for gaining spiritual understanding.

I followed the embankment of Kandy Lake, whose dark waters were deeply alive with the reflections of moon, stars and fireflies. The rhythm of pipes and drums in the Temple and the occasional toll of bells worked mesmerically until I was roused from this nocturnal enchantment by the sight of one of my friends sailing across the brow of the great moon, followed by another and a third, obviously in transit from a jungle camp to the ripening fruit or nectar-laden flowers of some distant tree.

There is, of course, no inherent connection between a fruit bat and a Buddhist, unless it be that they are both vegetarian. Yet, somehow in this pious setting, those three black wraiths were sudden reminders of one of Buddhism's most cherished avowals, namely, that all animals—worms, bats, gnus, birds, men—are in a sense to be regarded as brethren in whose bodies, via the mystique of transmigration, the souls of beings unenlightened in previous incarnations have returned for additional tries at worldly existence. Gautama Buddha himself, in the course of five hundred and fifty transmigrations, was successively a frog, a fish, a bird, an elephant, monkey, slave, king, hermit, tree, *et alia,* before finally gaining enlightenment and passing the Way on to mankind.

It seemed to me, as I walked on, that regardless of its doctrinal origin or interpretation, and reduced to its simplest terms, Buddhism's ancient concept of nonviolence to animals is an admirable system of conservation. I looked up and saw yet another great bat fly across the face of the moon. Nowhere else in the world, I reflected, would these ungainly relics of the Eocene be safer from assault and harm than here in the climate of Buddhism's central shrine.

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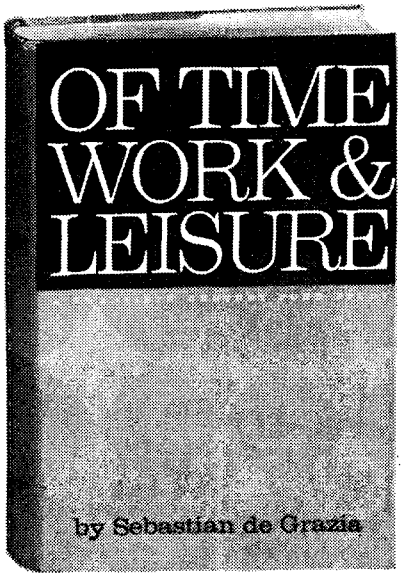

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Reviewed by OTTO F. KRAUSHAAR

Despite the attention that education receives today from statesmen, business leaders, admirals, pundits and the man next door, the concept of learning and teaching remains bogged down in anachronistic theories of the conditioned reflex, rote learning, the inexorable logical progression of subject matter, student "readiness," coverage of material and related aseptic, constraining doctrines. In consequence, the aims of education for different age groups are so much lower than they need to be and the waste in time and human talents continues to be staggering.

The tenor and direction of a promising new orientation of educational discussion owes much to Jerome Bruner's *The Process of Education,* a digest of the 1959 Woods Hole Conference on elementary curriculum in science and mathematics. In that book the author, a professional psychologist at Harvard, defended the brave assertion that any subject can be taught to anybody at any age in some form that is honest. This thesis was like a breath of fresh air in its new assessment of the human potential and in its imaginative new approaches to the psychology of learning and teaching. By virtue of its concentration on the preparatory intellectual and emotional steps on which formal learning is based and its subtle, evocative literary style the book marked the emergence of a welcome new genre in the literature on education.

On Knowing is in the same genre but it is broader in scope and explores the philosophical and psychological roots of the deep unconscious processes involved in creating, intuiting and knowing. The author's insights are based on studies of the sick and handicapped, but his aim is "to catch the swift flight of man's mind operating at its best." The essays comprising this volume are a miscellany composed for various special occasions over a period of five years. They are held together by nothing more than the fact that they represent related queries of one mind focused on intellectual and emotional processes that are in themselves arcane and inarticulate but known by their fruits. The ten essays are wide-ranging, embracing subjects as diverse as the conditions of creativity, the nature and uses of myth, identity in the modern novel, art as a mode of knowing, the act of discovery, learning in mathematics, evaluations of Dewey and Freud, and how one's conception of reality influences action and commitment.

His philosophical approach may be described as a literary, left-handed interpretation of Kantianism. Man is locked in the prison of his own subjectivity and assists in the creation of what he knows. Mr. Bruner is not concerned with the rational steps in knowing but with the powers, symbolized by the left hand, of intuition, feeling and spontaneity, with the dreams, the hunches and the leaps that are implicit in discovery. The stress is on the art of learning and

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✪ OTTO F. KRAUSHAAR, president of Goucher College since 1948, has taught philosophy at many schools including Harvard University, Smith College and Amherst College. He is co-author of *Classic American Philosophers.*

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teaching, the act of discovery and the unlocking of human capacities.

A chapter devoted to a succinct appraisal of John Dewey's pedagogic creed takes that philosopher to task for rejecting the tragic view of life and for accepting man's harmonious continuity with society, and for consequently failing to stress the function of education as an opener of perspectives that enable the individual to go beyond the ways of his social world in order to create an inner culture of his own. Dewey's defenders can doubtless find passages in his prolific texts to rebut these criticisms. But this will avail little. It is events, not arguments, that have revealed the inadequacies of Dewey's doctrine. Both this chapter and the one on Freud and the new image of man set forth in all too brief a compass the struggle of contemporary man to escape from the constraints that his own nature, the environment and the teaching process impose.

The congenial tone of Mr. Bruner's book, his ingratiating *aperçus* and his remarkable display of versatility do not, taking it all in all, suffice to cover the fact that these brief essays are no more than sketches or interesting asides—shavings from his workshop. Their chief merit lies in their suggestiveness. They open many doors affording glimpses of new approaches to teaching and learning, doors that psychological research has thus far largely ignored. But the reader looks in vain for conclusions solidly established or clear guides to reforms in education. The chapter on "The Conditions of Creativity" ends with the remark: "For the while, at least, we can do worse than live with a metaphoric understanding of creativity." But sooner or later we shall have to do much better if creativity, discovery and intuition are to support the urge to excellence in education.

Mr. Bruner's latest book does well in taking new philosophical and psychological bearings for a fresh attack on old, tough problems of education. One could wish that *On Knowing* marked a greater advance in depth in the understanding of the educational process which was approached so hopefully and promisingly in *The Process of Education.*

A Sovereign at the Center

JACOBEAN PAGEANT OR THE COURT OF KING JAMES I. *By G. P. V. Akrigg. Harvard University Press. $7.50.*

Reviewed by JAMES HOLLY HANFORD

The epoch of English history from the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603 to the crowning of Charles I in 1625 is as alluring and as demanding a subject as any modern writer could wish to have. It embraces, on the one hand, some of the great achievements of the human mind and, on the other, the beginnings of a political struggle that determined the future of Britain as a force in world affairs, and of the English as a self-governing people committed to a certain culture, a certain religion and a certain way of life. The central character, if not the hero, in this period is the sovereign. James VI of Scotland and I of England is no mere symbol, but a positive and dominating agent. In the drama and pageant of his reign, the major public figures—Howard and Cecil, Raleigh, Bacon, Buckingham—and the great antagonist, Parliament, play their independent roles yet call for arrangement around the throne as in a vast historical painting. Crowding the stage are a host of others whose affairs, whether or not they had political implications, often received the King's attention beyond the call of royal duty. An effulgence of light and color invests the scene.

The title of Professor Akrigg's book is happily chosen for what he tries to do. His aim is to give a comprehensive chronological account of events and characters in a serious but nontechnical way, confronting the essential problems of history while at the same time depicting the culture by making liberal use of the literary and artistic record. In this attempt his predecessors have been many, ranging in point of time from Sir Anthony Weldon (*The Court and Character of King*

JAMES HOLLY HANFORD, now visiting professor at Texas Technological College, is author of *A Milton Handbook* and *John Milton, Englishman* and editor of *The Poems of John Milton* and *A Restoration Reader.*

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James, 1650, the work of an eyewitness and participant), through Lucy Aikin (*Memoirs of the Court of King James the First,* 1823) and the great nineteenth-century historians, notably Lord Macaulay and S. R. Gardiner, down to the moderns, popular or scientific. There are of course great edited gatherings of sources: Rushworth's *Historical Collections; State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason & Other Misdemeanors* (eleven volumes!); Winwood's *Memorials of Affairs of State;* Nichols' *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First,* in all of which the materials are already partly journalized. And there are the poetry, the architecture, the music and the pictures, which make the pageant.

Professor Akrigg is broadly acquainted with these materials. He depends directly on the older sources, and he is not unwilling to expand a sensational episode into what may seem disproportionate length. Thus the wild tale of Arabella Stewart, a novel in itself, gets a whole chapter under the title, "Languishing Lady." Such digressions, with the detailed descriptions of the masques and triumphs, delay the narrative, but it is possible to keep the story straight and return to chronological sequence, having meanwhile participated with delight in the excitements that did actually fill the public mind as much and as little as the multitudinous matter of the daily newspaper fills our own. The focus of interest remains King James, and we come back in the end to the verdict of history on a man and an age, to a speculation on personality and a judgment on achievement.

The thesis of all informed and competent writing on the subject at the present time is that King James has fared ill at the hands of history. The triumphant Whigs of the eighteenth century attributed the worst of tyrannical motives to his efforts to resist Parliamentary infringements on his inherited rights. The slanderous stories put in print by the Puritan pamphleteers remained as tempting material for later narrative, and the actual ignominy of his last years was allowed to color the whole story and rob him of his earlier achievements. Professor Akrigg's own final judgment is temperate, inviting understanding and discrimination, although his formulation is not, after all, so different from what may be called received opinion.

It is illuminating to compare this book with D. Harris Willson's *King James VI and I* (Holt, 1956), the most recent comprehensive study of the period. Both are brilliantly conceived and written and both are the work of scholars but designed for the historical-minded nonspecialist. The two authors are adept in making use for dramatic purposes of sources they do not wholly trust. They choose different episodes to elaborate. Thus Arabella Stewart gets only subordinate treatment in Willson, who, however, particularizes the deathbed scene in a fullness that Akrigg, having expatiated on that of Prince Henry, denies himself. Akrigg, quoting the words of Queen Elizabeth, "A royal majesty is not privilege against death," makes an equestrian statue of imperial James in 1621, with ravaged face and scepter weakly held, the tragic symbol of his reign. Willson finds a parallel irony in the apotheosis painted by Rubens, at Charles I's command, on the ceiling of Whitehall.

Historians will for the most prefer Willson and indeed it is the more manageable piece of reading matter. It is also the more conformable to accepted historical method. We should not therefore conclude that it is the better book. Akrigg's reach exceeds his own or anybody else's grasp. But how ambitious should we be, and what can we expect in five hundred pages? He speaks to this reviewer's own condition in explaining many fundamental things that Willson takes for granted: the organization of the King's household, the function of the different offices, courts and councils, the relation of foreign policy to domestic, of heads of government to their subordinates. He is, finally, more successful in portraying James and more just in assessing his behavior. The worst that can be said of James is that he was a neurotic personality, made so by circumstance, and therefore—in spite of his intelligence—unfit to rule. The best is that he sought peace in a war-tormented world

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and maintained it until the external pressures grew too great and he himself fell prematurely into dotage. There is a lesson of humility for historians in the lack of charity with which posterity has judged him.

An Understandable Explication

THE INTEGRITY OF THE BODY: A Discussion of Modern Immunological Ideas. *By F. M. Burnet. Harvard University Press. $4.75.*

Reviewed by JOHN T. WILSON

The Integrity of the Body is the third in a series—"Harvard Books in Biology"—that is designed to furnish authoritative material on the subject for lay readers as well as for scholars outside the field. As such it maintains the high standards set by its predecessors, which include Martin Lindauer's *Communication Among Social Bees,* winner of the Phi Beta Kappa Science Prize for 1961.

The author states that the book "was written primarily to provide the information about immunology that I should like to have if I were a botanist or a geneticist or a physician with the same avid curiosity about things as they are that I have as a microbiologist." The book fully meets this criterion, and we sincerely hope that the publisher will find a botanist and a geneticist to return the favor.

The theme of Burnet's discussion of immunology derives from his concept of immunity as a bodily demand for chemical and cellular consistency. Thus he includes, but goes well beyond, a consideration of his subject matter in the more limited, albeit important, context of immunological mechanisms concerned with defense against infectious disease. In reading the book, one clearly senses the movement that has been taking place in this field during the past decade.

Starting with a chapter on the history of immunology in folklore and in medicine, the author takes up in order: a discussion of the nature of antibodies and the steps involved in their production, human blood groups and natural antibodies, the concept of "specific immunological tolerance" of individual organisms and the evolutionary significance of this mechanism, and the nature of immune reactions that do not depend upon antibodies for their initiation.

From such basic concepts Burnet proceeds to a consideration of the processes involved in the development of "immunologically competent" cells and how such processes are related to the more general biological problem of cellular differentiation. With this as a foundation, the concept of "self-recognition"—the general characteristic of an organism not to provoke immunological reactions against itself—is discussed, along with the problem of immunological tolerance.

Current theories of immunity are covered in two chapters, the first dealing with the author's own "clonal-selection" theory and the other with more orthodox points of view. Applications of immunology in nonmedical as well as in medical settings are then discussed. These cover a wide range that includes uses of antibody in biochemical analyses, in paternity-determination, for bloodstain identification, in skin grafts and other surgical procedures and in infectious, allergic and autoimmune diseases. In conclusion, Burnet speculates on how immunology may in the future "both help the gradual formation of the elusive integrated picture of biology and be interpretable in terms of wider concepts."

Burnet's lucid writing is supported throughout by illustrative examples drawn from the reader's acquaintance with childhood diseases, vaccinations, and from relatively well-publicized events such as the Salk vaccine story. At necessary points discussion of experimental material is supported by graphs and tables. Somewhat technical in spots, the book assumes at least a minimal understanding of chemistry and biology. It is an appropriate and recommended book for inclusion on the reading

✪ JOHN T. WILSON, now special assistant to the president of the University of Chicago, was formerly assistant director for biological and medical science of the National Science Foundation.

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Plastic Form, Ennobling Shelter

EERO SAARINEN ON HIS WORK. A Selection of Buildings, 1947 to 1964, with Statements by the Architect. *Edited by Aline B. Saarinen. Yale University Press. $10.*

Reviewed by FRANK GETLEIN

It will be a long time before American architecture recovers the loss it suffered in the premature death of Eero Saarinen. More than the profession of architecture, the American environment suffers the loss of some score of years of thought, of planning, of achievement that all vanished when he died, a year ago, at fifty-one. The measure of what lay ahead may be taken from what actually was built in a very short career. The name Saarinen has figured in American architecture since 1922, when Eero's father, Eliel, finished second in the international competition for the *Chicago Tribune* building. The winner was a perhaps appropriate fake-Gothic skyscraper that still stands, complete with flying buttresses buttressing nothing; the second-place design, never built, brought the Saarinens from Finland to found Cranbrook School outside Detroit. Eero Saarinen grew up in architecture, joining his father's firm in 1936; but he practiced as an independent architect only from his father's death, in 1950, until his own: less than a dozen years.

That so much was done in so few years is of course due in part to the momentum of his education and early service, but the achievement was his own and the debt is ours. Scattered around the country, in New Haven, Detroit, the Virginia countryside, New York, St. Louis, Milwaukee and in many midwestern places are Saarinen forms that have already enriched the lives of those who know them. Overseas the promise of a new America lives in part in Saarinen's American embassies in London and in Oslo.

"Plastic form" is a name Saarinen used and it is an important part of what he created. Arriving at professional independence in 1950, he was one of the very first major architects to realize fully that the modern architect can almost literally bring into being any form he wishes. This totally new total freedom can be a dangerous thing and Saarinen was aware of its dangers. But he moved boldly to get us beyond that interpretation of function that somehow saw the plain, unadorned box as the form invariably dictated by the most diverse functions. Thus the shaped and curving flow of the interiors at Idlewild's Trans World Airlines Terminal; thus the walls at the new Dulles Air Terminal for Washington, leaning out, away from each other, held together by the line of the roof as if a bow were bent to thrust man's most ancient missile into air; thus the hump-backed roof and swelling walls of the Yale University hockey rink, calling to mind, with no trace of historicism or animal metaphor, such northern things as Viking prows, stave churches and surfacing seabeasts.

He could handle boxes, too, if they seemed called for, and extract from them the same poetry. The London embassy is a whole, load-bearing surface of in-and-out boxes; at Milwaukee an open system of closed boxes is a kind of sky-trap and lake-trap.

Saarinen's definition of architecture's purposes describes his work: "To shelter and enhance man's life on earth and to fulfill his belief in the nobility of his existence."

The statements are expertly selected and reveal thought in progress as designs grew. The photographs and sketches are illumi-

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✪ FRANK GETLEIN, author of *A Modern Demonology, Movies, Morals and Art* and *Christianity in Modern Art,* is a contributing editor of the *New Republic* and art critic of the *Washington Star.*

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How To Do Things With Words

By John L. Austin. Based on the William James Lectures delivered at Harvard in 1955, this book represents Austin's conclusions in a field to which he directed his main efforts in the last ten years of his life. Beginning with a careful examination of his well-known distinction between performative utterances and statements, Austin here proceeds to replace that distinction with the more general theory of "illocutionary forces" of utterances. This development in his linguistic theory is sure to have important bearing on many linguistic and philosophical problems. $4.25

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Sources, Themes, Characters

By Gunnar Boklund. Mr. Boklund's sensitive study of the *Duchess of Malfi* begins with an examination of Webster's historical sources and of the earlier artistic treatments of the story. Secondary parallels in such writers as Sidney, Herodotus, and Cinthio are discussed. The author shows how Webster exploited the characters' psychological potential and how he shaped the incidents to form a powerful dramatic structure within the Elizabethan convention. Webster's horror scenes and the question of intended audience effect are perceptively discussed, and the book ends with an analysis of the play's artistic value. $4.00

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nating and numerous. The book is handsomely produced.

The Art of "Kremlinology"

THE SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT 1956-1961. *By Donald S. Zagoria. Princeton University Press. $8.50.*

Reviewed by JOHN K. FAIRBANK

This play-by-play narrative of the gradual development and various manifestations of the Peking-Moscow controversy is a demonstration of method as well as an absorbing story.

The method is that popularly called "Kremlinology"—the new kind of specialty that analyzes the stream of Communist communications, understands the esoteric meaning of "Aesopian language," spots divergencies of doctrinal exegesis, and so is able to infer what veiled conflicts may actually lie behind "the seemingly arid doctrinal polemics" of the Communist world. This type of analysis is possible because Communist communication, since Stalin, flows in two (or more) directions, as in the recent "dialogue" between Moscow and Peking, and must be in large part publicly accessible to party members. Since Communist ideology is, so to speak, "a living organism that must be adapted to new conditions," the analyst must know the history and complexities of the ideology, as well as the "operational code," protocol and practice of Communism. Thus armed, the scholar-detective can recognize various kinds of "clues" and penetrate to the differences of interest and policy that lie behind ideological differences.

Mr. Zagoria is plainly an able practitioner of this art, although the art itself, for all its novelty of content, is perhaps not quite so new, fundamentally, as he suggests. Careful textual analysis of communications has been the essence of diplomatic history. While Kremlinology is a valuable new application of textual methods developed in "diplomatics" as well as in ancient Talmudic and other exegesis, it also shares the limitations of such methods. The analyst's efficiency, like that of all historians, depends on his entering into the minds of the writers of the documents.

From this point of view, Mr. Zagoria's skillful study seems lacking on the side of historical background. The long histories of China and Russia and of their relations over the centuries lie behind the recent "dialogue" but are hardly represented in his dozen paragraphs on "the historical roots of conflict." This criticism is perhaps more than a mere counsel of perfection. For example, the day has long since passed when diplomatic history can be confined to the purely textual level of who-said-what-to-whom. Surely the history of Communism, for all its special and esoteric features, must similarly be approached from every possible angle. One may express enthusiasm for this book as a brilliant beginning without denying its lack of historical resonance—a criticism less of Mr. Zagoria than of the historical profession's failure to produce those studies of past Chinese-Russian relations that would add perspective to Kremlinology and Pekinology alike.

Mr. Zagoria's story of Sino-Soviet controversy goes back to the shock of the de-Stalinization begun at the Soviet Twentieth Party Congress in 1956. His detailed analysis, however, really begins in June 1957 and comes down to the end of 1961, after the Soviet denunciation of Albania at the Twenty-second Party Congress in October. He summarizes the evidence during these four years concerning a whole series of Sino-Soviet disputes: over "permanent revolution," the Chinese communes and alternative paths to Communism, over global strategy in the nuclear age, over intra-bloc relations and the issue of Yugoslavia, over the Quemoy crisis of 1958, over gradualism and a détente with the West, over aid to "national liberation" movements and underdeveloped countries, over "peaceful coexistence" or the inevitability of war, et cetera, et cetera. The list of these altercations is a long one and leaves no doubt of the deep-seated nature of the friction within the Sino-Soviet alliance.

JOHN K. FAIRBANK is director of the East Asian Research Center at Harvard University.

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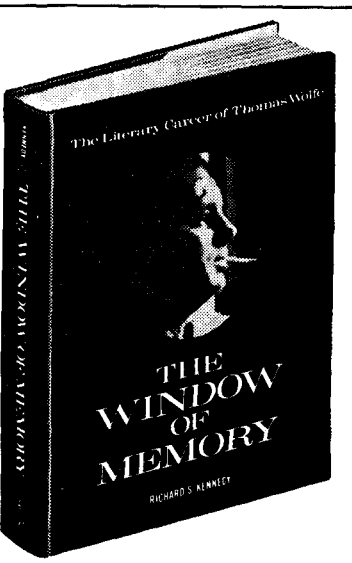

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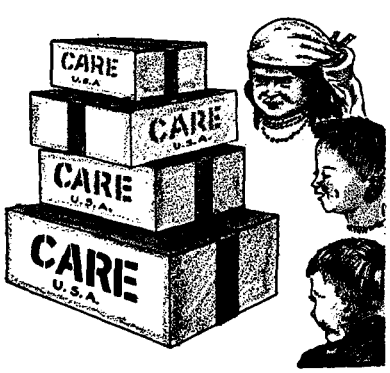

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—EDITOR

I wish to express my pleasure and edification in reading Mr. Roger Hagan's incisive analysis (AS: Autumn, 1962) of the new Administration position in respect to "The Atmospheric Tests" and related matters. I believe the perspective he reveals, far from "vanishing," must ultimately "prevail," because I believe in democracy, an instrument that has already laid civil defense low, and that, with the help of more citizens like Mr. Hagan, should do the same for counterforce and the strike-first facade.

T. E. PHIPPS
China Lake, California

* * *

In spite of my respect and fondness for Joseph Wood Krutch, I cannot resist commenting on his "If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . ." in your issue for Autumn, 1962. I *do* mind his saying so, since his article, in effect, creates an altogether new and artificial form of science, and then slays this cardboard dragon with the greatest of ease.

I have no mandate to speak for science or scientists, and can do so with no background of prestige or authority: I am one of the anonymous herd of semiscientists that does odd jobs for large corporations and drifts vaguely about in the never-never land where chemistry, physics, mathematics and engineering blend with administrative assignments. If I can present only a worm's-eye view, however, such a view may be overdue. Worms are damned along with higher forms of life in such articles as Mr. Krutch's—and they seldom get to talk back. I feel that it is time to turn. . . .

For the last forty years, I have associated with scientists, been lectured by scientists, and supervised the activities of scientists. In all that time, I have never heard a scientist argue that scientists were "better guys," or that any of them had any monopoly of virtue or immunity to error. On the contrary, at the American Chemical Society meeting in September, I spent a good part of one evening agreeing with some fellow members that we were a strangely maladjusted group—many of us in obvious flight from the realities of human relationships, and so timid that a large percentage of the group ate alone rather than dare to speak to a fellow chemist. And I have never known a scientist who argued that "happiness" was directly proportional to some easily measured standard like income: on the contrary, engineers and scientists are notoriously a thorn in the side of corporate management, since their degree of contentment—like their productivity—seems to have no visible relationship to income or title.

Likewise, it is nonsense to insist that science deals only with that which "is measurable and subject to experimental verification." Astronomy is probably the oldest of our sciences: do men manipulate planets or experiment with suns? Do geographers and geologists toy with mountains? Or meteorologists create experimental hurricanes? Or oceanographers drain the seven seas to demonstrate a theory? Is there science in medicine only to the extent that we can measure pain?

Science is more than an accumulation of measurements and experiments—as it is more than "an organized body of knowledge." (A telephone directory is a well-organized body of knowledge, but one million telephone directories do not make a science.) Science is a form of understanding, a way of grasping the universe and seeing it as something more than chaos. It is, if you wish, the unforeseen result of an irrational faith—the curious consequence of a conviction that an increase in understanding was good, in and of itself, and that nature might be under-

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standable and predictable. (There is pragmatic justification for such belief now—but there was none at the beginning.) I am tempted to suggest that Mr. Krutch redefine the proper scope of science as including all matters that are open to human understanding. Quibbling over the proper place of science, or the fundamental nature of science, is, however, a singularly sterile and childish waste of time. Science will be judged by what it does—not by what it claims, or by what limits are assigned to it. And science, being man-made, may be changed by men —no matter what we may like to think that its nature inevitably must be.

If no one has the right to say what science *must* be, however, it still may be worthwhile to point out what science has been, and is; and worthwhile, too, to point out that the facts give little support to the theory that science is ethically sterile, or abnormally helpless in the face of value judgments.

Science, as we know it, exists only because there have been an appreciable number of men who placed a very high value on intellectual honesty, and who believed that an increase in understanding was among the greatest of goods. It exists, in the form that we know it, because scientists, as scientists, are dedicated to a code of conduct that demands objectivity, tolerance, free expression of opinion, free sharing of information, patience, honesty, persistence and the giving of credit where credit is due. (It may be that such a code has no place in real life, but I, for one, should like to see some attempt to apply it more widely in international affairs.) Scientists, being human, often fall short of their ideals, and it may well be that scientists are as unapt to carry scientific objectivity into human relationships as Christians are to allow Christianity to interfere with a quick profit or a winning war. There is one important difference, however, between science and other irrational faiths: I know of no case in which one scientist has felt impelled to broil another scientist over a slow fire to prove the soundness of his theories, nor has any crusade to wipe out error been made the pretext for the extermination of one group of scientists by another.

Mr. Krutch complains that science cannot tell us what *should* be done, even though it may tell us what *can* be done. But does Mr. Krutch know of any infallible guide to value judgments? A pair of dice will give us an unequivocal decision in such cases, and will be right almost exactly one-half the time. This is, I think, a better record than has been made to date by any religion or any political or economic sys-

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tem. Science is unique only in that it makes no claim to do the impossible.

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* * *

The article by Joseph Wood Krutch (AS: Autumn, 1962) was quite interesting as a defense of the humanities. Certainly it is one of the best such that I have seen, because it rests on many true assertions and seems to show a better grasp of the nature of science than most humanists have. However, it thus gains persuasiveness, and consequently requires a reply from the scientific side. I am taking on the task, as one trained as a scientist and staunchly scientifically oriented.

Mr. Krutch has quoted Justice Holmes, in a way that makes it clear that he is in full agreement, as saying that "science teaches us a great deal about things that are not really very important, philosophy a very little bit about those that are supremely so." I would challenge this statement on several interrelated counts. First of all, I fail to see the great importance of studying something about which—Mr. Krutch concedes—no conclusion can be drawn that all would accept. If (and the quote is from his own article) the humanist "is compelled, generation after generation, to begin all over again," does it not follow that all that has gone before is wasted? Knowledge that cannot serve as a foundation for more knowledge is no knowledge at all. Let the philosophers speculate (it's really harmless) but attach little or no importance to those speculations.

Secondly, he defends the importance of the humanities because only they can deal with "honor, love, duty, the good life." I will not even make a pretense of their being fit subjects for science; the impossibility of science's dealing with them does not make them unimportant *per se;* but it seems to me that these are matters of instinct, or at least cultural conditioning, and all the humanists in the world cannot make a dishonorable man honorable, or increase man's store of the other qualities cited. What importance attaches to man's philosophizing on them? Again, really very little, or none at all.

Finally, Mr. Krutch seems to claim that, because much of the humanist's product is sharply recognized by the human mind, it is worth consideration. This, of course, brings me back to the second point made in this letter, and further elaboration is unnecessary.

In conclusion, I must state that most of the points made by Mr. Krutch in defense of the humanities can really be turned against him, although it is true that doing so rests on a value judgment, and this means that one must take the humanist's attitude to reject the humanities. The war between Science and the Humanities is one that can never really be won, since it can only be fought on subjective grounds, which, by their very nature, do not *prove* anything.

BRUCE R. GILSON
New York, New York

* * *

Just last evening I read Mr. Raphael Malsin's excellent letter in the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, and I want him to know how glad I am he wrote it! I agree with him on practically every point, and I think people such as the SCHOLAR's editors *need* to be talked back to—they are having things their own way much too much! I am sure there are a great many people all over the country who do think as Mr. Malsin does, and who do applaud convictions such as his. Would that they would all become vocal as he did—and as effectively!

MRS. DAVID HAMBLEN, III
Newton, Massachusetts

* * *

In your Summer edition Dr. Anthony Storr reminds us that C. G. Jung, in observing a hostile world, called for man to contemplate himself more and materialism less. Here is a new emphasis for education in dramatic tragedy as a thing to be felt within the classroom. I emphasize "felt"—said, read aloud, memorized—rather than "learned," since ours is an age of cold glossing over of multidigited accidental and deliberate (war) casualty statistics.

Further implication for education comes from Jung's concept of the libido as a multi-energy force. In adolescence, where one's awareness of one's self and one's fellows broadens swiftly and dynamically, humane awareness is to be absorbed via ink blotter from dramatic, tragic literature. Here is energy use in one direction. Another is to lead the adolescent to literature and knowledge that intrigue his personal predilections when his energies or capacities for absorbing vocabulary, ideas and aspirations are so dynamic. Then it is axiomatic that rate of physical growth and rate of learning will keep pace.

GORDON HIMELFARB
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